

# HENRY IV PART I

---

THE RSC SHAKESPEARE

MODERN



LIBRARY

**William Shakespeare**  
Edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen  
Introduction by Jonathan Bate

## **The RSC Shakespeare**

Edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen

Chief Associate Editors: Héloïse Sénéchal and Jan Sewell

Associate Editors: Trey Jansen, Eleanor Lowe, Lucy Munro,  
Dee Anna Phares

### **Henry IV Part I**

Textual editing: Eric Rasmussen

Introduction and Shakespeare's Career in the Theater:  
Jonathan Bate

Commentary: Jan Sewell and Héloïse Sénéchal

Scene-by-Scene Analysis: Esme Miskimmin

In Performance: Karin Brown (RSC stagings), Jan Sewell  
(overview)

The Actor's Voice and the Director's Cut

(interviews by Jonathan Bate and Kevin Wright): Michael  
Pennington, Adrian Noble, Michael Boyd

### **Editorial Advisory Board**

Gregory Doran, Chief Associate Director, Royal  
Shakespeare Company

Jim Davis, Professor of Theatre Studies, University of  
Warwick, UK

Charles Edelman, Senior Lecturer, Edith Cowan University,  
Western Australia

Lukas Erne, Professor of Modern English Literature,  
Université de Genève, Switzerland

Akiko Kusunoki, Tokyo Woman's Christian University,  
Japan

Jacqui O'Hanlon, Director of Education, Royal Shakespeare  
Company

Ron Rosenbaum, author and journalist, New York, USA

James Shapiro, Professor of English and Comparative  
Literature, Columbia University, USA

Tiffany Stern, Professor of English, University of Oxford,  
UK

The RSC Shakespeare

William Shakespeare

# HENRY IV PART I

Edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen

Introduction by Jonathan Bate



The Modern Library  
New York

# CONTENTS

## Introduction

Tragical-Comical-Historical-Pastoral

Harry to Harry

Honor Versus Instinct

The Prince as Machiavel?

Reformation and Rejection

## About the Text

### Key Facts

*The First Part of Henry the Fourth, with the Life and Death of Henry Surnamed Hotspur*

### Textual Notes

### Oaths from the Quarto

### Scene-by-Scene Analysis

### Synopsis of *Henry IV Part II*

### *Henry IV* in Performance: The RSC and Beyond

Four Centuries of *Henry IV*: An Overview

At the RSC

The Actor's Voice and the Director's Cut: Interviews with Michael Pennington, Adrian Noble, and Michael Boyd

### Shakespeare's Career in the Theater

Beginnings

Playhouses

The Ensemble at Work

The King's Man

**Shakespeare's Works: A Chronology**

**Kings and Queens of England: From the History Plays to Shakespeare's Lifetime**

**The History Behind the Histories: A Chronology**

**Further Reading and Viewing**

**References**

**Acknowledgments and Picture Credits**

# INTRODUCTION

## TRAGICAL-COMICAL-HISTORICAL-PASTORAL

Shakespeare's art of mingling comedy, history, and tragedy reached its peak in the two parts of *Henry IV*. As history, the plays paint a panorama of England, embracing a wider social range than any previous historical drama as the action moves from court to tavern, council chamber to battlefield, city to country, Archbishop and Lord Chief Justice to whore and thief. As comedy, they tell the story of a prodigal son's journey from youth to maturity and an old rogue's art of surviving by means of jokes, tall tales, and the art of being not only witty in himself, but the cause that wit is in other men. As tragedy, they reveal the slow decline of a king who cannot escape his past, the precipitate demise of an impetuous young warrior who embodies both the glory and the futility of military heroism, and the heartbreaking dismissal of a substitute father who has loved a prince with a warmth of which his true father is incapable.

The action begins some time after the events that ended Shakespeare's earlier play, *Richard II*. Henry Bullingbrook has usurped the throne of King Richard, who has been murdered. But now the rebels who helped Henry to the throne have turned against him. Whereas *Richard II* conformed to the traditional structure of tragedy—the story of the fall of a powerful man—the *Henry IV* plays adopt a wider perspective. *Richard II* had been written entirely in

verse, the medium of royal and aristocratic characters, whereas long stretches of the *Henry IV* plays are in prose, the medium of the common people. The little scene with the Carriers at the tavern just before the highway robbery is a miniature of ordinary working-day life and common speech: “This house is turned upside down since Robin the ostler died.”

The deep structure of the two parts of *Henry IV* is that not of tragedy but of pastoral comedy. They were written around the same time as *Much Ado About Nothing* and *As You Like It*, when Shakespeare’s comic muse was at its zenith. They are his most enjoyable history plays because they are his funniest—and in the figure of Sir John Falstaff they introduce his greatest comic character—but they also share with the comedies a technique of counterpointing the intrigue of court and power politics against what has been called the “green” or “festive” world.

The traditional comic pattern turns on the successful effort of a young man to outwit an opponent and possess the girl of his choice. The girl’s father, or some other authority figure of the older generation, resists the match, but is outflanked, often thanks to an ingenious scheme devised by a clever servant, perhaps involving disguise or flight (or both). The union of the lovers brings a renewed sense of social integration, expressed by some kind of festival at the climax of the play—a marriage, a dance, or a feast. All right-thinking people come over to the side of the lovers, but in Shakespearean comedy there is usually a party pooper, a figure who refuses to be assimilated into the harmony—Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Don John in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Jaques in *As You Like It*, Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. The key to the two parts of *Henry IV* is that they take the comic structure and apply it to Prince Harry—with the difference that, instead of his courtship (which ends up being tacked on very briefly at the end of



*Henry V*), the action turns on his maturation from wild youth to exemplary warrior prince and statesman. And, in a brilliant reversal, the figure who is isolated at the end is not the party pooper but the embodiment of the festive spirit: Falstaff. Comedy is thus placed in opposition to the march of history. The necessity to reject Falstaff in the name of historical destiny and social order is why the final resolution is tinged with the feeling of tragedy.

The distinctive feature of pastoral comedy is that the action develops by means of a shift of location from the everyday world of work, business, politics, patriarchy, and power to a “green” or “festive” place of play, leisure, anarchy, feminine influence, and love—the wood in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Belmont in *The Merchant of Venice*, the Forest of Arden in *As You Like It*, rural Bohemia in *The Winter’s Tale*. After the comic resolution is achieved, there has to be a return to the normative world, but recreative change has been effected by the values of the festive world. In *Henry IV Part I*, a tavern in Eastcheap plays the part of the festive world. In *Part II*, there is a reprise of that setting, but also a rural green world. As in the comedies, the shuttle between contrasting worlds and contradictory value systems creates the dialectic of the drama. But because of the calling of the prince to power, there can be no reconciliation between the value systems. Prince Hal announces in his first soliloquy that his time of “playing holidays” and “loose behaviour” will be but an interlude before he takes upon himself the mantle of historical duty.

## **HARRY TO HARRY**

*Richard II* had followed the tragic pattern of a mismatch between the character of a man of high estate and the demands of his position as a ruler. It juxtaposed the fall of

King Richard to the rise of Henry Bullingbrook, comparing them to a pair of buckets on a pulley, one descending into a well as the other ascends. Once Bullingbrook has become King Henry IV, the pattern is reasserted and reversed in the next generation. Henry sees his son seeming to become another Richard, a time waster surrounding himself with unsuitable companions and allowing the country to run to seed. He sees himself—a soldier, a man of decision and action—not in his son, but in Hotspur, child of the Percy family who had helped him to displace Richard from the throne.

Historically, Henry Percy, known as Hotspur, was more than twenty years older than Prince Henry (usually called Harry and, by Falstaff alone, Hal), the future King Henry V, victor of Agincourt. With his habitual dramatic license, Shakespeare altered history and made them rival youths of the same generation. Henry IV's nightmare of history repeating itself is that Hotspur will play his own role to his son's Richard. He wishes that "some night-tripping fairy" had exchanged the two Harries in their cradles "And called mine Percy, his [i.e. Northumberland's] Plantagenet." But this time it is the rebel who falls and the true heir who succeeds. *Henry IV*, a doubleheader of a play, is full of doubles. There are paired fathers and sons: the king and the prince, Northumberland and Hotspur in *Part I*. There are surrogate fathers to the young hero: Sir John Falstaff and, in *Part II*, his antithesis, the Lord Chief Justice. There are brothers in blood (in *Part I*, Northumberland and Worcester, Hotspur and his brother-in-law Mortimer; in *Part II*, Prince Harry and Prince John, the aged kinsmen Shallow and Silence) and brothers in jest (Hal's "sworn brethren" among the tavern crowd, Ned Poins chief among them).

One of the questions that fascinates Shakespeare in these plays is, what is the appropriate education for a future

king? The Tudor view was that the ideal king should combine the qualities of soldier, scholar, and courtier. Fencing, jousting, and hunting offered training in the chivalric arts of the medieval aristocracy, but a learned humanist tutor was also required to drill the prince in languages, literature, history, ethics, law, and theology. And at the same time it was necessary to imbibe the elaborate codes of behavior, the conventions of propriety and deference, upon which courtship depended.

Hotspur is the embodiment of an old-style chivalric warrior. He would rather be astride his horse than engaging in courtly parley with his wife. He lives by the code of honor and is deliciously scornful of the courtly manners embodied by the trimly dressed, clean-shaved lord who comes with “pouncet-box” in hand to demand Hotspur’s prisoners: the clash of styles between battlefield and court is enough to turn him into a rebel. Hotspur has boundless courage and energy, but his desire “To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon” is susceptible to parody: his own wife teases him and Prince Hal mocks him as “the Hotspur of the north, he that kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his hands, and says to his wife ‘Fie upon this quiet life! I want work.’” His impulsiveness means that he cannot calculate, he is never the politician. “[A] plague upon it, / I have forgot the map!” he says during a council of war. A more politic customer would be most unlikely to have forgotten it—and would never admit as much if he had.

As Hotspur embodies the old chivalric code, his fellow warrior, the Welshman Glendower, stands for an equally antiquated mode of being: magical thinking. He boasts of portents at his birth—fiery shapes in the air and goats running from the mountains—but this kind of talk is ridiculed. When he claims that he can call spirits from the vasty deep, Hotspur wryly asks, “But will they come when

you do call for them?” Talk of dragons and finless fish is “skimble-skamble stuff” which does nothing to advance the cause of the rebellion. In the end, the consequence of Glendower’s desire to listen to prophecies is that he fails to turn up for the battle.

## HONOR VERSUS INSTINCT

*Part I* shows Prince Harry playing “truant” from “chivalry,” but returning to it when the time is ripe. Even as he proves himself on the battlefield, the critique of honor continues with Falstaff’s mock “catechism”: “Can honour set to a leg? No...Who hath it? He that died o’Wednesday.” Falstaff’s philosophy is a simple “give me life”: never mind about ethical and political codes of behavior. “I am not a double man,” he says to Hal, putting down the dead Hotspur, whom he has been carrying on his back. Yet he is double the size of anyone else in the play and he has a double life, rising from feigned death on the battlefield of Shrewsbury so that he can return in *Part II*. It will be altogether harder to get rid of cowardly Falstaff than to defeat brave Hotspur. “Thou art not what thou seem’st,” remarks Hal: in seeming to have killed Hotspur, Falstaff is not the coward he has appeared to be. But he has not slain Hotspur, merely stabbed him when he is already dead—a supremely dishonorable deed. And yet, what is honor? A mere word, an empty code. It is the trickster, the chancer, who survives, not the honorable man.

Falstaff is at once the great deceiver and the great truth-teller, who reduces war to its bottom line: common foot soldiers are but “food for powder.” One of the reasons why Shakespeare made him fat was to remind the audience of the solidity of the human body: Falstaff’s girth is a way of saying that history is made not only of big speeches and dramatic events, but also of the daily lives of people who

eat, drink, sleep, and die: “Rare words! Brave world! Hostess, my breakfast, come! / O, I could wish this tavern were my drum!”

A key word is “instinct.” Hotspur has instinctive courage and Falstaff an instinctive sense of self-preservation. The king thinks that his son is instinctively idle and irresponsible. The aim of a sixteenth-century royal humanist education was to overcome such innate propensities by developing the ethical, linguistic, and political faculties of the pupil prince. For Hal, the King’s Tavern in Eastcheap serves as a parody of the schoolroom at court. Falstaff is explicitly identified as his “tutor” and a central part of his education is to learn a new language—not, however, Latin, Greek, or the rhetorical elaboration of courtly speech, but the language of the people. This is a Harry who develops the art of speaking with every “Tom, Dick and Francis.” He learns their jargon—“They call drinking deep, dyeing scarlet”—and he becomes “so good a proficient in one quarter of an hour” that he will be able to “drink with any tinker in his own language” for the rest of his life.

Henry IV believes that one of the failings of his predecessor Richard II had been to seek to make himself popular, thus eroding the necessary distance that creates awe and gives mystique to the monarchy. But King Henry’s own distance from public life—he is nearly always seen surrounded by an inner circle of courtiers or closeted alone in his chamber—causes power to ebb from him. His son, by contrast, comes to know the common people, developing a rapport that will enable him to inspire and lead his army in *Henry V*. The point is made through the very linguistic medium of the drama: all Shakespeare’s other English kings speak entirely in verse, whereas Prince Hal has command of a flexible prose voice, with which he reduces himself to the level of his people, an Eastcheap trick that he repeats

when he goes in disguise among his men on the night before the battle of Agincourt.

The prince works according to the principle articulated by the cunning politician Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*: a man “Cannot make boast to have that which he hath, / Nor feels not what he owes, but by reflection, / As when his virtues shining upon others / Heat them and they retort that heat again / To the first giver.” That is to say, we can only make value judgments through a process of comparison. “Percy is but my factor, good my lord, / To engross up glorious deeds on my behalf”: by temporarily ceding glory to Henry Hotspur, Henry Monmouth will seem all the more glorious when he eventually triumphs over him. His whole strategy is revealed in the imagery of his first soliloquy: the sun seems brighter after cloud and a jewel on a dull background will “show more goodly and attract more eyes / Than that which hath no foil to set it off.” The offsetting of the prince against his various foils is the structural key to the drama.

### **THE PRINCE AS MACHIAVEL?**

What is the basis of political rule? Orthodox Tudor theory propounded that kings and magistrates were God’s representatives on earth, their authority sanctioned by divine law. But the Elizabethan stage had another possible answer. Christopher Marlowe’s tragedy *The Jew of Malta*, written about 1589 and well known to Shakespeare, has an extraordinary opening. The prologue is spoken by an actor pretending to be the Florentine political theorist Niccolò Machiavelli. He voices a series of deeply subversive suggestions about the nature of sovereignty. His riposte to political orthodoxy is that the only basis of effective government is raw power:

I count religion but a childish toy,  
And hold there is no sin but ignorance...  
Many will talk of title to a crown:  
What right had Caesar to the empery?  
Might first made kings, and laws were then  
most sure  
When, like the Draco's, they were writ in  
blood.

Religion as an illusion; the idea that human knowledge does not require divine sanction; the notion that it is “might” not “right” that decides who rules; the proposition that the most effective laws are those based not on justice but on the severity exemplified by the ancient Greek lawgiver Draco (from whose name we get the word “draconian”). French and English thinkers of Shakespeare’s time demonized Machiavelli for holding these views, but for Christopher Marlowe the act of thinking the unthinkable made Machiavelli a model for his own overreaching stage heroes.

Shakespeare’s history plays are steeped in the influence of Marlowe, but politically he was much more cautious—he would never have risked suffering Marlowe’s end, stabbed to death by a government spy while awaiting questioning in a heresy investigation. But that did not stop Shakespeare from recognizing the theatrical charisma of the Marlovian machiavel. He created a string of such characters himself—Aaron the Moor in *Titus Andronicus*, Richard III, Iago in *Othello*, Edmund in *King Lear*. What attracted him to the type was not so much the subversive politics as the stage panache of the unapologetic villain. Political orthodoxy is staid and solemn. The machiavel is nimble and witty. But is he necessarily brutal and irreligious?

Prince Harry is a man of the future; his father is haunted by the past. Both parts of *Henry IV* are suffused with the memory of the “by-paths and indirect crooked ways” by which Bullingbrook “met” (or rather took) the crown. The king is revealed at his most vulnerable halfway through *Part II*, in a scene that may have troubled the censor: sick and sleepless, he meditates on the cares of state, the fragility of office, and the weight of his past sin. A usurper himself, Henry IV has no ground on which to base his authority over the rebels who were once his allies. The only basis of his power is victory on the battlefield. In each part, this is achieved by means of a trick. At Shrewsbury in *Part I*, the device consists of dressing several different men as the king in order to confuse the enemy. Having slain one of the impersonators, Douglas assumes that he is addressing another of them: “What art thou, / That counterfeit’st the person of a king?” This time, however, it is the king, not a counterfeit—which beautifully dramatizes the point that the king is a counterfeit because of his usurpation. In *Part II*, the king is too sick to fight his own battle, so at Gaultree Forest the Machiavellian strategy of reneging upon the terms of a negotiated truce is carried out by his second son, Prince John of Lancaster. Does that make Prince Harry into the true follower of Machiavelli, who advised that the effective prince is one who gets someone else to do his dirty work for him?

At the beginning of *Part I*, the king says that he must postpone his Crusade to the Holy Land because of the new civil broils at home, the fresh wound upon the earth of England. His dream of expiating his sins by liberating Jerusalem from the heathen is never translated into action. The prophecy that he would end his life there is only realized ironically: he dies in the “Jerusalem chamber” of Westminster Abbey. Henry IV’s fear, apparently borne out



by the bad company that Prince Harry keeps, is that the sin of the father will be visited upon the reign of his son:

For the fifth Harry from curbèd licence plucks  
The muzzle of restraint, and the wild dog  
Shall flesh his tooth in every innocent.  
O my poor kingdom, sick with civil blows!  
When that my care could not withhold thy  
riots,  
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?  
O, thou wilt be a wilderness again,  
Peopled with wolves, thy old inhabitants!

He imagines that the “riot” of the wayward prince will be translated into civil disorder when he becomes king. That is also Falstaff’s hope on hearing that his beloved Hal is now Henry V: “the laws of England are at my commandment...and woe unto my Lord Chief Justice!” But he is in for a shock: Hal immediately adopts Falstaff’s adversary, the Lord Chief Justice, as his new surrogate father. As in *Part I* he had startled the rebels by transforming himself from tavern idler to armed warrior on horseback, so in *Part II* he will prove that he has learned the civic virtues as well as the military ones.

The prince’s self-revelatory soliloquy early in *Part I* began with the words “I know you all.” The newly crowned king’s rejection of Falstaff late in *Part II* begins with the words “I know thee not, old man.” The verbal echo is unmistakable: he has ceased to be Hal, he is now delivering on his promise that the time would come when he would throw off the companions and misleaders of his youth. As predicted in the soliloquy, Harry has succeeded in falsifying men’s hopes. His reformation glitters over his fault. Falstaff and company suddenly seem to be no more than instruments in a princely conjuring trick, a theatrical

act of self-transformation designed to impress a public audience.

Radically opposing interpretations thus become possible. By one account, the politic march of history stands in violent contrast to the humane virtues of friendship, loyalty, good humor, sociability, verbal inventiveness, self-mockery, and love. Humanity gives way to what the Bastard in *King John* called “commodity.” History is a Machiavellian nightmare of violence and self-interest. The alternative view is that Falstaff embodies the temptations of the flesh. He scores highly for at least three of the seven deadly sins—gluttony, lust, and sloth. He is the Vice figure of the old tradition of morality plays and his rejection is accordingly Hal’s final step on the path toward political and moral redemption. So it is that Hal can be played equally persuasively as a young man going on a journey toward maturity but still enjoying his departures from the straight and narrow path, or as one of Shakespeare’s Machiavellian manipulators—energetic and intellectually astute, a brilliant actor, but intensely self-conscious, emotionally reined in.

We may perhaps reconcile the opposing readings by supposing that, in the character of Prince Hal, Shakespeare—perhaps as his own riposte to Marlowe—set out to create a new and distinctive kind of “good machiavel”: a political realist who is prepared to take difficult, even brutal, decisions when it is necessary, but who, instead of being atheistic and self-interested, always tries to do what he takes to be God’s will and so to serve the best interests of his nation and his people. Still, though, the dilemma remains: even as Falstaff uses Hal for his own advancement, he is always a truer father than the cold and politic King Henry IV can ever be. The point is made with beautiful clarity by the contrast between Falstaff’s heated engagement in the scene in which he and Hal act out the

prodigal prince's forthcoming interview with his father and the king's chilly detachment in the interview itself.

## REFORMATION AND REJECTION

It is not known whether Shakespeare always intended *Henry IV* to be a two-part play or whether he discovered at some point in the writing or production of *Part I* that it would be dramatically unsatisfying to contain a double climax in a single play, to have Prince Harry prove himself a chivalric hero by defeating Hotspur on the battlefield and then immediately dissociate himself from Falstaff and the other thieves. Instead, the rejection of Falstaff is withheld until *Part II*, but anticipated in the play-within-the-play in *Part I*, where the prince's return to his father is pre-enacted in the tavern.

The scene is a glorious piece of improvised theater, with the actors changing roles and parodying different linguistic registers. Thus, for instance, when Falstaff plays King Henry he apes the affected courtly prose style of the once fashionable writer John Lyly: "for though the camomile, the more it is trodden the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is wasted the sooner it wears." It is a mark of Shakespeare's attention to detail that when Falstaff is playing the king he calls the prince "Harry" instead of his pet name, "Hal." Though the language of the mock play is intricate and varied, the staging is simple: "This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre and this cushion my crown." The meta-theatrical effect reminds the audience that they are in a theater, and at the same time suggests that power is itself a form of theater. There is no intrinsic reason why a golden crown is sacred and a stuffed cushion anarchic; whether in a theater or a palace, a throne may represent a "chair of state," but it is still a mere chair.

A chair is a chair and, as Gadshill puts it, "*Homo* is a common name to all men." Falstaff may be "that reverend Vice, that grey Iniquity, that father Ruffian, that Vanity in years," but he is also the embodiment of the shared frailty of all humanity: "If sack and sugar be a fault, heaven help the wicked: if to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old host that I know is damned." To banish plump Jack is to banish "all the world." "I do," says Hal, playing the role of his father the king. "I will," he adds, anticipating what he will do when he becomes king himself. As so often when Shakespeare's art is working in its most concentrated form, judgment is left suspended. Is Hal "essentially made," with or without knowing it? And is it possible to be a true friend and a true prince? At the end of the "play extempore," he is friend more than prince, lying to an authority figure, the sheriff, in order to protect Falstaff. So is he—as some editors emend—"essentially mad," fundamentally as opposed to temporarily a "madcap"? "The true prince may, for recreation sake, prove a false thief," says Falstaff: is the playtime of "recreation" a space for a brief interlude of misrule or a crucible in which the self is re-created?

There is little historical warrant for the story of Henry V's riotous youth. A "prodigal son" narrative was attached to him in the chronicles and the anonymous play *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* in order to highlight the change he undergoes when he becomes king, submits to the rule of law, and so unifies and brings to order the nation that his father divided. The rejection of Falstaff and company is part and parcel of Harry's symbolically becoming a new person at the moment of his coronation. The notions of "reformation" and the washing away of past iniquities clearly have strong religious connotations. Each time the prince returns to the court, he speaks a language of "fall" and "pardon." When he fights well, his father tells him, "Thou hast redeemed thy lost opinion."

The rhythm of Prince Hal's life is that of providential history, leading to his "reformation" and his assumption of the roles which attracted Queen Elizabeth to him: unifier of the body politic, victor over a rival kingdom, heroic leader of a great and independent nation. The rhythm of Falstaff's life is that of the body and the seasons. In *Part II* he will journey into the deep England of Justice Shallow's Gloucestershire orchard. We learn from Shallow that Falstaff began his career as page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. This appears to be a Shakespearean fancy without source: it is true of neither the historical Sir John Falstaff, who flees the battlefield in *Henry VI Part I*, nor the historical Sir John Oldcastle, of whom the character of Falstaff was originally an irreverent portrait. Why did Shakespeare give his fictional Falstaff a past that began in the service of Mowbray? At one level, it links him with opposition to the Lancastrian ascendancy represented by King Henry IV and his son. Mowbray was Henry IV's opponent when the latter was still Bullingbrook, back at the beginning of *Richard II*. Like father, like son: as Bullingbrook's accusation of treachery was instrumental in the banishment of Mowbray from the land, so Hal will banish Falstaff from his presence. Mowbray departs with a moving farewell to his native land and language; the effect of his words is to suggest that love of the English earth and the English word goes deeper than dynastic difference. We do not hear similar patriotic sentiments in the mouth of the self-interested Bullingbrook; he does nothing to bring back the old England idealized in the deathbed speech of his father, John of Gaunt (whose name and whose England will also be remembered by Shallow).

In Shakespeare's own time, those who suffered banishment because of ideological difference, but who claimed that they were nevertheless loyal to England, were predominantly Catholics. And this suggests another level to

the allusion that binds Falstaff to the Duke of Norfolk. To an Elizabethan audience, the name of Norfolk—the only surviving dukedom in the land—was synonymous with overt or suspected Catholic sympathy. The old Catholic ways persisted in the country long after the official change of religion inaugurated by Henry VIII's break from Rome. The Catholic liturgy's integral relationship with the agricultural calendar and the cycles of human biology could not be shattered overnight. There may, then, be a sense in which Falstaff's journey into deep England is also a journey into the old religion of Shakespeare's father and maternal grandfather. One wonders if it is a coincidence that, in fleshing out the skeletal character of the prince's riotous companion that he inherited from the old play *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*, Shakespeare retained and made much of his own father's name, John. It is ironic that Falstaff's original surname, Oldcastle, had to be changed because the character was regarded as an insult to the memory of the proto-Protestant Lollard of that name: "for Oldcastle died martyr," says the epilogue to *Part II*, "and this is not the man."

Indeed, it is not the man, for Falstaff is if anything an embodiment of those ancient Catholic rhythms which were suppressed in the name of Reformation. Vestiges of Oldcastle litter the text: "Falstaff sweats to death" suggests a martyr burning on a bonfire, and "if I become not a cart as well as another man" could suggest a religious dissident on the way to the stake as well as a criminal being taken to the gallows. Protestants, especially in the extreme form of Puritans, were traditionally lean; fat monks were symbolic of the corruptions of Catholicism. By making Sir John fat and not calling him Oldcastle, Shakespeare raises the specter of Catholic as opposed to Protestant martyrdoms. Falstaff is Malvolio's opposite: he stands for cakes and ale, festival and holiday, all that was anathema to Puritanism.

At the beginning of *Henry V*, the Archbishop of Canterbury confirms that Prince Harry's transformation was completed with the rejection of Falstaff: "Never came reformation in a flood, / With such a heady currance, scouring faults." If there is a proto-Protestant or embryonic Puritan in the plays, it is King Harry V, newly washed of his past, casting off his old companions, turning away England's former self.

## ABOUT THE TEXT

Shakespeare endures through history. He illuminates later times as well as his own. He helps us to understand the human condition. But he cannot do this without a good text of the plays. Without editions there would be no Shakespeare. That is why every twenty years or so throughout the last three centuries there has been a major new edition of his complete works. One aspect of editing is the process of keeping the texts up to date—modernizing the spelling, punctuation, and typography (though not, of course, the actual words), providing explanatory notes in the light of changing educational practices (a generation ago, most of Shakespeare’s classical and biblical allusions could be assumed to be generally understood, but now they can’t).

But because Shakespeare did not personally oversee the publication of his plays, editors also have to make decisions about the relative authority of the early printed editions. Half of the sum of his plays only appeared posthumously, in the elaborately produced First Folio text of 1623, the original “Complete Works” prepared for the press by Shakespeare’s fellow actors, the people who knew the plays better than anyone else. The other half had appeared in print in his lifetime, in the more compact and cheaper form of “Quarto” editions, some of which reproduced good quality texts, others of which were to a greater or lesser degree garbled and error-strewn. In the case of a few plays there are hundreds of differences



between the Quarto and Folio editions, some of them far from trivial.

If you look at printers' handbooks from the age of Shakespeare, you quickly discover that one of the first rules was that, whenever possible, compositors were recommended to set their type from existing printed books rather than manuscripts. This was the age before mechanical typesetting, when each individual letter had to be picked out by hand from the compositor's case and placed on a stick (upside down and back to front) before being laid on the press. It was an age of murky rushlight and of manuscripts written in a secretary hand that had dozens of different, hard-to-decipher forms. Printers' lives were a lot easier when they were reprinting existing books rather than struggling with handwritten copy. Easily the quickest way to have created the First Folio would have been simply to reprint those eighteen plays that had already appeared in Quarto and work from manuscript only on the other eighteen.

But that is not what happened. Whenever Quartos were used, playhouse "promptbooks" were also consulted and stage directions copied in from them. And in the case of several major plays where a reasonably well printed Quarto was available, the Folio printers were instructed to work from an alternative, playhouse-derived manuscript. This meant that the whole process of producing the first complete Shakespeare took months, even years, longer than it might have done. But for the men overseeing the project, John Hemings and Henry Condell, friends and fellow actors who had been remembered in Shakespeare's will, the additional labor and cost were worth the effort for the sake of producing an edition that was close to the practice of the theater. They wanted all the plays in print so that people could, as they wrote in their prefatory address to the reader, "read him and again and again," but

they also wanted “the great variety of readers” to work from texts that were close to the theater life for which Shakespeare originally intended them. For this reason, the *RSC Shakespeare*, in both *Complete Works* and individual volumes, uses the Folio as base text wherever possible. Significant Quarto variants are, however, noted in the Textual Notes.

*Henry IV Part I* is one of the plays where the Folio text was printed from a Quarto, though with reference to a playhouse manuscript, in which a large number of oaths had been removed in accordance with the 1606 Parliamentary “Act to Restrain the Abuses of Players,” whereby theater companies were prohibited from taking God’s name in vain. Most modern editors use the First Quarto of 1598 as their copy text but import stage directions, act divisions, and some corrections from Folio. Our Folio-led editorial practice follows the reverse procedure, using Folio as copy text, but deploying the First Quarto as a “control text” that offers assistance in the correction and identification of compositors’ errors in the Folio, of which there are many. The traditional notion of fidelity to Shakespeare’s first Quartos, on the grounds that they represent the texts closest to “what the author wrote,” is sometimes more an ideal than a reality. Early Quartos have errors too. And later Quartos made good corrections as well as introducing new errors. The lesson of textual transmission is the same as that of the theater: the Shakespearean text was mobile in its own time and remains ever mobile. Each time one of the plays is performed, whatever the “copy text,” the words will be slightly different, thanks to the tricks of actors’ memories. So, too, each time the play is edited, there will be dozens of differences of punctuation, emendation, and interpretation. Textual mobility is an essential part of Shakespeare’s evolving creative afterlife. Our text is a modernized version

of one moment in that life—the moment of the Folio, when all Shakespeare’s history plays were gathered and put in sequence for the first time.

In order to respect the integrity of the Folio text, we have not reinserted the Quarto oaths that were removed from it. They are, however, listed at the end of the text and we recommend classroom discussion of the effect of their removal and rehearsal room reinsertion of them for the purposes of contemporary performance.

The following notes highlight various aspects of the editorial process and indicate conventions used in the text of this edition:

**Lists of Parts** are supplied in the First Folio for only six plays, not including *Henry IV Part I*, so the list here is editorially supplied. Capitals indicate that part of the name which is used for speech headings in the script (thus “Sir Richard VERNON”).

**Locations** are provided by the Folio for only two plays. Eighteenth-century editors, working in an age of elaborately realistic stage sets, were the first to provide detailed locations. Given that Shakespeare wrote for a bare stage and often an imprecise sense of place, we have relegated locations to the explanatory notes at the foot of the page, where they are given at the beginning of each scene where the imaginary location is different from the one before.

**Act and Scene Divisions** were provided in the Folio in a much more thoroughgoing way than in the Quartos. Sometimes, however, they were erroneous or omitted; corrections and additions supplied by editorial tradition are

indicated by square brackets. Five-act division is based on a classical model, and act breaks provided the opportunity to replace the candles in the indoor Blackfriars playhouse which the King's Men used after 1608, but Shakespeare did not necessarily think in terms of a five-part structure of dramatic composition. The Folio convention is that a scene ends when the stage is empty. Nowadays, partly under the influence of film, we tend to consider a scene to be a dramatic unit that ends with either a change of imaginary location or a significant passage of time within the narrative. Shakespeare's fluidity of composition accords well with this convention, so in addition to act and scene numbers we provide a *running scene* count in the right margin at the beginning of each new scene, in the typeface used for editorial directions. Where there is a scene break caused by a momentary bare stage, but the location does not change and extra time does not pass, we use the convention *running scene continues*. There is inevitably a degree of editorial judgment in making such calls, but the system is very valuable in suggesting the pace of the plays.

**Speakers' Names** are often inconsistent in Folio. We have regularized speech headings, but retained an element of deliberate inconsistency in entry directions, in order to give the flavor of Folio.

**Verse** is indicated by lines that do not run to the right margin and by capitalization of each line. The Folio printers sometimes set verse as prose, and vice versa (either out of misunderstanding or for reasons of space). We have silently corrected in such cases, although in some instances there is ambiguity, in which case we have leaned toward the preservation of Folio layout. Folio sometimes uses contraction ("turnd" rather than "turned") to indicate

whether or not the final “-ed” of a past participle is sounded, an area where there is variation for the sake of the five-beat iambic pentameter rhythm. We use the convention of a grave accent to indicate sounding (thus “turnèd” would be two syllables), but would urge actors not to overstress. In cases where one speaker ends with a verse half line and the next begins with the other half of the pentameter, editors since the late eighteenth century have indented the second line. We have abandoned this convention, since the Folio does not use it, nor did actors’ cues in the Shakespearean theater. An exception is made when the second speaker actively interrupts or completes the first speaker’s sentence.

**Spelling** is modernized, but older forms are occasionally maintained where necessary for rhythm or aural effect.

**Punctuation** in Shakespeare’s time was as much rhetorical as grammatical. “Colon” was originally a term for a unit of thought in an argument. The semicolon was a new unit of punctuation (some of the Quartos lack them altogether). We have modernized punctuation throughout, but have given more weight to Folio punctuation than many editors, since, though not Shakespearean, it reflects the usage of his period. In particular, we have used the colon far more than many editors: it is exceptionally useful as a way of indicating how many Shakespearean speeches unfold clause by clause in a developing argument that gives the illusion of enacting the process of thinking in the moment. We have also kept in mind the origin of punctuation in classical times as a way of assisting the actor and orator: the comma suggests the briefest of pauses for breath, the colon a middling one, and a full stop or period a longer pause. Semicolons, by contrast, belong to an era of

punctuation that was only just coming in during Shakespeare's time and that is coming to an end now: we have accordingly used them only where they occur in our copy texts (and not always then). Dashes are sometimes used for parenthetical interjections where the Folio has brackets. They are also used for interruptions and changes in train of thought. Where a change of addressee occurs within a speech, we have used a dash preceded by a period (or occasionally another form of punctuation). Often the identity of the respective addressee is obvious from the context. When it is not, this has been indicated in a marginal stage direction.

**Entrances and Exits** are fairly thorough in Folio, which has accordingly been followed as faithfully as possible. Where characters are omitted or corrections are necessary, this is indicated by square brackets (e.g. “[*and Attendants*]”). *Exit* is sometimes silently normalized to *Exeunt* and *Manet* anglicized to “remains.” We trust Folio positioning of entrances and exits to a greater degree than most editors.

**Editorial Stage Directions** such as stage business, asides, indications of addressee and of characters' position on the gallery stage are used only sparingly in Folio. Other editions mingle directions of this kind with original Folio and Quarto directions, sometimes marking them by means of square brackets. We have sought to distinguish what could be described as *directorial* interventions of this kind from Folio-style directions (either original or supplied) by placing them in the right margin in a different typeface. There is a degree of subjectivity about which directions are of which kind, but the procedure is intended as a reminder to the reader and the actor that Shakespearean stage

directions are often dependent upon editorial inference alone and are not set in stone. We also depart from editorial tradition in sometimes admitting uncertainty and thus printing permissive stage directions, such as *Aside?* (often a line may be equally effective as an aside or as a direct address—it is for each production or reading to make its own decision) or *may exit* or a piece of business placed between arrows to indicate that it may occur at various different moments within a scene.

**Line Numbers** in the left margin are editorial, for reference and to key the explanatory and textual notes.

**Explanatory Notes** at the foot of each page explain allusions and gloss obsolete and difficult words, confusing phraseology, occasional major textual cruces, and so on. Particular attention is given to non-standard usage, bawdy innuendo, and technical terms (e.g. legal and military language). Where more than one sense is given, commas indicate shades of related meaning, slashes alternative or double meanings.

**Textual Notes** at the end of the play indicate major departures from the Folio. They take the following form: the reading of our text is given in bold and its source given after an equals sign, with “Q” indicating that it derives from the First Quarto of 1598, “Q5” that it derives from the Fifth Quarto of 1613, “Q7” from the Seventh Quarto of 1632, “F” from the First Folio of 1623, “F2” a correction introduced in the Second Folio of 1632, “F3” a correction introduced in the Third Folio of 1663–64, and “Ed” one that derives from the subsequent editorial tradition. The rejected Folio (“F”) reading is then given. Selected Quarto variants and plausible unadopted editorial readings are

also included. Thus, for example, “**1.2.80 for...it** = F. Q = for wisdom cries out in the streets and no man regards it” indicates that we have retained the Folio reading “for no man regards it,” but that “for wisdom cries out in the streets and no man regards it” is an interestingly different reading in the First Quarto of 1598.



## KEY FACTS

**MAJOR PARTS:** (with percentage of lines/number of speeches/ scenes on stage) Falstaff (20%/151/8), Prince Henry (18%/170/10), Hotspur (18%/102/8), King Henry (11%/30/6), Worcester (6%/35/7), Poins (3%/36/3), Glendower (3%/23/1). Several characters speak between 15 and 30 of the play's 3,000 lines: Douglas, Hostess Quickly, Gadshill, Vernon, Mortimer, Lady Percy, Bardolph, Blunt, Northumberland, Westmorland, Francis.

**LINGUISTIC MEDIUM:** 55% verse, 45% prose.

**DATE:** Probably written and first performed 1596–97; registered for publication February 1598. Falstaff's name was originally Oldcastle; it was probably changed to Falstaff either during the months when William Brooke, Lord Cobham (an indirect descendant of the historical Sir John Oldcastle), was Lord Chamberlain (August 1596 to March 1597) or following the suppression of playing (July–October 1597) caused by a politically inflammatory play called *The Isle of Dogs*.

**SOURCES:** Based on the account of the reign of Henry IV in the 1587 edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, with some use of Samuel Daniel's epic poem *The First Four Books of the Civil Wars* (1595). Thus, for instance, the historical Hotspur

was twenty years older than Hal, but Daniel made them contemporaries for dramatic effect. The intermingling of historical materials and comedy, in the context of the prince's riotous youth, is developed from the anonymous Queen's Men play *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (performed late 1580s), which includes characters who may be regarded as crude prototypes of Falstaff and Poins.

**TEXT:** Quarto 1598 (text probably based on a scribal transcript of Shakespeare's manuscript; two printings, one of them lost save for a few sheets), reprinted 1599, 1604, 1608, 1613, 1622 (indicating that this was one of Shakespeare's most popular plays). The Folio text was set from the Fifth Quarto, correcting some but nowhere near all of its mistakes. Oaths were systematically removed in accordance with the 1606 Parliamentary "Act to Restrain the Abuses of Players": since the Act applied to stage performances, not printed books, this suggests that a theatrical manuscript also lay behind the Folio text. There is therefore good reason to regard Folio as an autonomous text, with its own authority. Our text is based on Folio, but where there are manifest errors, either derived from the Quarto tradition or introduced by the Folio compositors, we restore readings from the First Quarto.

**THE FIRST PART OF  
HENRY THE FOURTH,  
with the Life and  
Death of Henry  
Surnamed Hotspur**

## LIST OF PARTS

KING HENRY IV, formerly Henry Bullingbrook, Duke of Lancaster

PRINCE HENRY, Prince of Wales, Hal or Harry Monmouth

PRINCE JOHN, his younger brother, Lord of Lancaster

Earl of WESTMORLAND

Sir Walter BLUNT

Sir John FALSTAFF

Edward or Ned POINS

PETO

BARDOLPH

Earl of NORTHUMBERLAND, Henry Percy

Earl of WORCESTER, Thomas Percy, his younger brother

HOTSPUR, Sir Henry (or Harry) Percy, Northumberland's son

Lord Edmund MORTIMER, Earl of March, Hotspur's brother-in-law

Owen GLENDOWER, Welsh lord, Mortimer's father-in-law

Earl of DOUGLAS, a Scots Lord

Sir Richard VERNON

ARCHBISHOP of York, Richard Scroop

SIR MICHAEL, member of Archbishop's household

LADY PERCY (Kate), Hotspur's wife, Mortimer's sister

LADY MORTIMER, Mortimer's wife, Glendower's daughter

FIRST CARRIER (Mugs)

OSTLER

SECOND CARRIER (Tom)

GADSHILL

CHAMBERLAIN

FIRST TRAVELLER

SECOND TRAVELLER

FRANCIS, an apprentice drawer or tapster

VINTNER

HOSTESS QUICKLY, landlady of a tavern

SHERIFF

SERVANT

MESSENGER

Lords, Soldiers, other Travellers, and Attendants

## Act 1 Scene 1

### *running scene 1*

---

**Location:** the royal court. Henry Bullingbrook had usurped the English crown in 1399 when he forced his cousin, Richard II, to abdicate. Richard died shortly afterward in mysterious circumstances. The early years of Henry's reign were dominated by a determination to justify and consolidate his claim to the throne and by a number of insurrections. As the play opens, Henry voices his anxiety about civil unrest

*Enter the King, Lord John of Lancaster, [the] Earl of Westmorland, with others*

KING HENRY IV    So shaken as **we** are, so **wan** with care,  
    **Find we** a time for **frighted** peace to pant,  
    And **breathe short-winded accents** of new **broils**  
    To be commenced in **strands afar remote**.  
    No more the thirsty **entrance** of this soil  
    Shall **daub** her lips with her own children's blood.  
    No more shall **trenching** war channel her fields,  
    Nor bruise her **flow'rets** with the **armèd** hoofs  
    Of hostile **paces**. Those **opposèd** eyes,  
    Which, like the **meteors** of a troubled heaven,  
    All of one nature, of one substance bred,  
    Did lately meet in the **intestine shock**  
    And furious **close** of civil butchery  
    Shall now, in **mutual well-beseeming** ranks,

March all one way and be no more opposed  
Against acquaintance, kindred and allies.  
The edge of war, like an ill-sheathèd knife,  
No more shall cut his master. Therefore, friends,  
As far as to the [sepulchre of Christ](#) —  
Whose soldier now, under whose blessèd cross  
We are [impressèd](#) and [engaged](#) to fight —  
Forthwith a [power](#) of English shall we [levy](#),  
Whose [arms](#) were moulded in their [mother's](#) womb  
To chase these pagans in those holy [fields](#)  
Over whose acres walked those [blessèd feet](#)  
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed  
For our advantage on the [bitter](#) cross.  
But this our purpose is a twelvemonth old,  
And [bootless](#) 'tis to tell you we will go:  
Therefore we meet not now.— Then let me hear  
Of you, my [gentle cousin](#) Westmorland,  
What [yesternight](#) our council did decree  
In forwarding this [dear expedience](#).

WESTMORLAND My [liege](#), this haste was [hot in question](#),  
And many [limits of the charge](#) set down  
[But](#) yesternight, when all [athwart](#) there came  
A [post](#) from Wales [loaden](#) with [heavy](#) news;  
Whose worst was that the noble Mortimer,  
Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight  
Against the [irregular and wild Glendower](#),  
Was by the [rude](#) hands of that Welshman taken,  
And a thousand of his people butcherèd,  
Upon whose dead [corpse](#) there was such misuse,  
Such beastly shameless [transformation](#),

By those Welshwomen done as may not be  
Without much shame retold or spoken of.

KING HENRY IV It seems then that the tidings of this broil  
Brake off our business for the Holy Land.

WESTMORLAND This matched with other like, my gracious lord.  
Far more uneven and unwelcome news  
Came from the north and thus it did report:  
On Holy Rood day, the gallant Hotspur there,  
Young Harry Percy, and brave Archibald,  
That ever-valiant and approvèd Scot,  
At Holmedon met, where they did spend  
A sad and bloody hour,  
As by discharge of their artillery,  
And shape of likelihood, the news was told,  
For he that brought them, in the very heat  
And pride of their contention did take horse,  
Uncertain of the issue any way.

KING HENRY IV Here is a dear and true industrious friend,  
Sir Walter Blunt, new lighted from his horse,  
Stained with the variation of each soil  
Betwixt that Holmedon and this seat of ours,  
And he hath brought us smooth and welcome news.  
The Earl of Douglas is discomfited,  
Ten thousand bold Scots, two and twenty knights,  
Balked in their own blood did Sir Walter see  
On Holmedon's plains. Of prisoners, Hotspur took  
Mordake, Earl of Fife, and eldest son  
To beaten Douglas, and the Earl of Athol,  
Of Murray, Angus, and Menteith.  
And is not this an honourable spoil?  
A gallant prize? Ha, cousin, is it not?



WESTMORLAND In faith, it is a conquest for a prince to boast of.

KING HENRY IV Yea, there thou mak'st me sad and mak'st me sin

In envy that my Lord Northumberland  
Should be the father of so blest a son:  
A son who is the **theme** of honour's tongue;  
Amongst a grove, the very **straightest plant**,  
Who is sweet Fortune's **minion** and her pride,  
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,  
See **riot** and dishonour stain the brow  
Of my young Harry. O, that it could be proved  
That some **night-tripping fairy** had exchanged  
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,  
And called mine Percy, his **Plantagenet**:  
Then would I have his Harry, and he mine.  
But let him **from** my thoughts. What think you, **coz**,  
Of this young Percy's pride? The prisoners,  
Which he in this **adventure** hath **surprised**,  
To his own use he keeps, and sends me word  
I shall have none but Mordake Earl of Fife.

WESTMORLAND This is his uncle's teaching. This is Worcester,  
Malevolent to you in all aspects,  
Which makes him **prune** himself, and **bristle** up  
The crest of youth against your **dignity**.

KING HENRY IV But I have sent for him to answer this.  
And for this **cause** awhile we must neglect  
Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.  
Cousin, on Wednesday next our council we  
Will hold at Windsor, and so inform the lords.  
But come yourself with speed to us again,

For more is to be said and to be done  
Than **out of anger can be utterèd**.

WESTMORLAND I will, my liege.

*Exeunt*

## Act 1 Scene 2

*running scene 2*

---

*Location: in London, but unspecified; perhaps the prince's apartments*

*Enter Henry, Prince of Wales [and] Sir John Falstaff*

FALSTAFF Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

PRINCE HENRY Thou art so **fat-witted** with drinking of old **sack** and unbuttoning thee after supper and sleeping upon benches in the afternoon, that thou hast **forgotten** to **demand that truly** which thou wouldst truly know. What

a  
devil hast thou to do with the time of the day? Unless  
hours

were cups of sack and minutes **capons** and clocks the  
tongues of **bawds** and **dials** the signs of **leaping-houses**  
and

the blessed sun himself a fair **hot** wench in flame-coloured  
**taffeta**, I see no reason why thou shouldst be so

superfluous

to demand the time of the day.

FALSTAFF Indeed, you **come near me** now, Hal, for we that take purses **go by** the moon and **seven stars**, and not by **Phoebus**, he, 'that **wand'ring knight so fair**'. And, I prithee,

sweet **wag**, when thou art king, as God save thy **grace** — majesty I should say, for grace thou wilt have none—

PRINCE HENRY What, none?

FALSTAFF No, not so much as will serve to be prologue to an **egg and butter**.

PRINCE HENRY Well, how then? Come, **roundly**, roundly.

FALSTAFF **Marry**, then, sweet wag, when thou art king, let not us that are **squires of the night's body** be called **thieves of the**

**day's beauty**. Let us be **Diana's foresters**, gentlemen of the shade, **minions** of the moon; and let men say we be men **of**

**good government**, being governed, as the sea is, by our noble

and chaste mistress the moon, under whose **countenance** we **steal**.

PRINCE HENRY Thou say'st well, and it **holds** well too, for the fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb and flow like

the sea, being governed, as the sea is, by the moon. As, for

proof, now: a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with swearing '**Lay by**' and spent with crying

‘Bring in’, now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder  
and

by and by in as high a flow as the ridge of the gallows.

FALSTAFF Thou say’st true, lad. And is not my hostess of the  
tavern a most sweet wench?

PRINCE HENRY As is the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the  
castle.

And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance?

FALSTAFF How now, how now, mad wag? What, in thy quips  
and thy quiddities ? What a plague have I to do with a  
buff  
jerkin?

PRINCE HENRY Why, what a pox have I to do with my hostess  
of  
the tavern?

FALSTAFF Well, thou hast called her to a reck’ning many a  
time and oft.

PRINCE HENRY Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?

FALSTAFF No, I’ll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there.

PRINCE HENRY Yea, and elsewhere, so far as my coin would  
stretch, and where it would not, I have used my credit.

FALSTAFF Yea, and so used it that  
were it here apparent that thou art heir apparent — but, I  
prithee, sweet wag, shall  
there be gallows standing in England when thou art king?  
And resolution thus fobbed as it is with the rusty curb of  
old  
father antic the law? Do not thou, when thou art a king,  
hang a thief.

PRINCE HENRY No, thou shalt.

FALSTAFF Shall I? O rare! I'll be a brave judge.

PRINCE HENRY Thou judgest false already: I mean, thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves and so become a rare hangman.

FALSTAFF Well, Hal, well, and in some sort it jumps with my humour as well as waiting in the court, I can tell you.

PRINCE HENRY For obtaining of suits

FALSTAFF Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman hath no lean wardrobe. I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a lugged bear.

PRINCE HENRY Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

FALSTAFF Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

PRINCE HENRY What say'st thou to a hare, or the melancholy of Moorditch?

FALSTAFF Thou hast the most unsavoury similes and art indeed the most comparative, rascalli'st, sweet young prince.

But, Hal, I prithee trouble me no more with vanity. I would

thou and I knew where a commodity of good names were to

be bought. An old lord of the council rated me the other day

in the street about you, sir, but I marked him not. And yet he

talked very wisely, but I regarded him not; and yet he

talked

wisely, and in the street too.

PRINCE HENRY    Thou didst well, for **no man regards it**.

FALSTAFF    O, thou hast **damnable iteration** and art indeed able  
to corrupt a **saint**. Thou hast done much harm unto me,  
Hal,

God forgive thee for it! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew  
nothing. And now I am, if a man should speak truly, little  
better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life,  
and I

will give it over. **An** I do not, I am a villain. I'll be damned  
for

**never a** king's son in Christendom.

PRINCE HENRY    Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, **Jack**?

FALSTAFF    Where thou wilt, lad, I'll **make one**. An I do not,  
call

me villain and **baffle**

PRINCE HENRY    I see a good **amendment** of life in thee, from  
praying to purse-taking.

FALSTAFF    Why, Hal, 'tis my **vocation**, Hal: 'tis no sin for a  
man

to labour in his vocation. Poins! Now shall we know if  
**Gadshill** have **set a watch**. O, if men were to be **saved by**  
**merit**, what hole in hell were hot enough for him? This is  
the

most **omnipotent** villain that ever cried '**Stand**' to a **true**  
man.

*[Enter Poins]*

PRINCE HENRY Good morrow, Ned.

POINS Good morrow, sweet Hal. What says **Monsieur Remorse**? What says **Sir John Sack and Sugar, Jack**? How agrees the devil and thee about thy soul, that thou soldest him on **Good Friday** last for a cup of **Madeira** and a cold capon's leg?

PRINCE HENRY Sir John stands to his word, the devil shall have his bargain, for he was never yet a breaker of proverbs: he will  
**give the devil his due.**

POINS Then art thou damned for keeping thy word with the devil.

PRINCE HENRY **Else he had** been damned for **cozening** the devil.

POINS But, my lads, my lads, tomorrow morning, by four o'clock, early at **Gad's Hill**, there are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London

with fat purses. I have **vizards** for you all; you have horses for

yourselves. Gadshill **lies** tonight in **Rochester**. I have **bespoke**

supper tomorrow in **Eastcheap**; we may do it as **secure** as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff your purses full of **crowns**:  
if

you will not, **tarry** at home and be hanged.

FALSTAFF Hear ye, **Yedward**, if I tarry at home and go not, I'll **hang you** for going.

POINS You will, **chops**?

FALSTAFF Hal, wilt thou make one?

PRINCE HENRY    Who, I rob? I a thief? Not I.

FALSTAFF    There's neither honesty, manhood, nor good  
fellowship in thee, nor thou cam'st not of the **blood royal**,  
if  
thou dar'st not **stand for ten shillings** .

PRINCE HENRY    Well then, once in my days I'll be a madcap.

FALSTAFF    Why, that's well said.

PRINCE HENRY    Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

FALSTAFF    I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

PRINCE HENRY    I care not.

POINS    Sir John, I prithee leave the prince and me alone: I  
will lay him down such reasons for this adventure that he  
shall go.

FALSTAFF    **Well, mayst thou have the spirit of persuasion and  
he the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may  
move  
and what he hears may be believed**, that the true prince  
may,  
for recreation sake, prove a false thief; for the poor **abuses**  
of  
the time **want countenance**. Farewell. You shall find me in  
Eastcheap.

PRINCE HENRY    Farewell, the **latter spring!** Farewell, **All-  
hallown  
summer**

*[Exit Falstaff]*

POINS    Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us  
tomorrow. I have a jest to execute that I cannot manage



alone. Falstaff, Peto, Bardolph and Gadshill shall rob those

men that we have already waylaid: yourself and I will not be

there. And when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob

them, cut this head from my shoulders.

PRINCE HENRY But how shall we part with them in setting forth?

POINS Why, we will set forth before or after them, and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at our pleasure to fail; and then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves, which they shall have no sooner achieved, but we'll set upon them.

PRINCE HENRY Ay, but 'tis like that they will know us by our horses, by our habits and by every other appointment, to be ourselves.

POINS Tut! Our horses they shall not see: I'll tie them in the wood. Our vizards we will change after we leave them. And,

sirrah, I have cases of buckram for the nonce, to immask our noted outward garments.

PRINCE HENRY But I doubt they will be too hard for us.

POINS Well, for two of them, I know them to be as truebred cowards as ever turned back. And for the third, if he fight longer than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be the incomprehensible lies that this

fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper: how thirty  
at  
least he fought with, what **wards**, what blows, what  
extremities he endured; and in the **reproof** of this lies the  
jest.

PRINCE HENRY Well, I'll go with thee. Provide us all things  
necessary and meet me tomorrow night in Eastcheap.  
There  
I'll **sup**. Farewell.

POINS Farewell, my lord.

*Exit Poins*

PRINCE HENRY I know you all, and will awhile **uphold**  
The **unyoked humour** of your idleness.  
Yet herein will I imitate the **sun**,  
Who doth permit the base **contagious clouds**  
To smother up his beauty from the world,  
That when he please again to be himself,  
Being **wanted**, he may be more wondered at,  
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists  
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.  
If all the year were playing holidays,  
To **sport** would be as tedious as to work;  
But when they seldom come, they wished-for come,  
And nothing pleaseth but **rare accidents**.  
So, when this loose behaviour I throw off  
And pay the debt I never promised,  
By how much better than my word I am,  
By so much shall I **falsify men's hopes**,  
And like bright metal on a **sullen ground**,  
My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,

Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes  
Than that which hath no foil to set it off.  
I'll so offend to make offence a skill,  
Redeeming time when men think least I will.

[Exit]

## Act 1 Scene 3

*running scene 3*

---

*Location: the royal court*

*Enter the King, Northumberland, Worcester, Hotspur, Sir Walter Blunt and others*

KING HENRY IV    My blood hath been too cold and temperate ,  
Unapt to stir at these indignities,  
And you have found me; for accordingly  
You tread upon my patience. But be sure  
I will from henceforth rather be myself,  
Mighty and to be feared, than my condition,  
Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,  
And therefore lost that title of respect  
Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

WORCESTER    Our house, my sovereign liege, little deserves  
The scourge of greatness to be used on it.  
And that same greatness too which our own hands  
Have help to make so portly.

NORTHUMBERLAND My lord—

*To the King*

KING HENRY IV Worcester, get thee gone, for I do see  
Danger and disobedience in thine eye.  
O, sir, your presence is too bold and **peremptory**,  
And majesty might never yet endure  
The **moody frontier** of a servant brow.  
You have **good leave** to leave us. When we need  
Your **use** and counsel, we shall send for you.—

*[Exit Worcester]*

You were about to speak.

*To Northumberland*

NORTHUMBERLAND Yea, my good lord.  
Those prisoners in your highness' name demanded,  
Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,  
Were, as he says, not **with such strength denied**  
As was **delivered** to your majesty,  
Who either through **envy or misprision**  
Was guilty of this fault and not my son.

HOTSPUR My liege, I did deny no prisoners.

*To the King*

But I remember, when the fight was done,  
When I was **dry with rage** and extreme toil,  
Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword,  
Came there a certain lord, **neat** and **trimly** dressed,

Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin new reaped  
Showed like a stubble-land at harvest-home.  
He was perfumèd like a milliner,  
And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held  
A pouncet-box, which ever and anon  
He gave his nose and took't away again,  
Who therewith angry, when it next came there,  
Took it in snuff. And still he smiled and talked,  
And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,  
He called them untaught knaves, unmannerly,  
To bring a slovenly unhandsome corpse  
Betwixt the wind and his nobility.  
With many holiday and lady terms  
He questioned me, among the rest demanded  
My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.  
I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold,  
To be so pestered with a popinjay,  
Out of my grief and my impatience,  
Answered neglectingly I know not what,  
He should or should not. For he made me mad  
To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet  
And talk so like a waiting-gentlewoman  
Of guns and drums and wounds — God save the mark! —  
And telling me the sovereign'st thing on earth  
Was parmaceti for an inward bruise,  
And that it was great pity, so it was,  
That villainous saltpetre should be digged  
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,  
Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed  
So cowardly, and but for these vile guns,  
He would himself have been a soldier.  
This bald unjointed chat of his, my lord,

Made me to answer *indirectly*, as I said,  
And I *beseech* you let not this report  
*Come current* for an accusation  
Betwixt my love and your high majesty.

BLUNT    The circumstance considered, good my lord,

*To the King*

Whatever Harry Percy then had said  
To such a person and in such a place,  
At such a time, with all the rest *retold*,  
May reasonably *die* and never rise  
To do him wrong or any way *impeach*  
What then he said, *so* he unsay it now.

KING HENRY IV    Why, *yet he* doth *deny* his prisoners,  
But with *proviso and exception*,  
That we at our own *charge* shall ransom *straight*  
His brother-in-law, the foolish *Mortimer*,  
Who, in my soul, hath wilfully betrayed  
The lives of those that he did lead to fight  
Against the great magician, damned Glendower,  
Whose daughter, as we hear, the *Earl of March*  
Hath lately married. Shall our *coffers*, then,  
Be emptied to redeem a traitor home?  
Shall we buy treason, and *indent* with *fears*  
When they have lost and forfeited themselves?  
No, on the barren mountain let him starve,  
For I shall never hold that man my friend  
Whose tongue shall ask me for one penny cost  
To ransom home *revolted* Mortimer.

HOTSPUR    Revolted Mortimer?

He never did **fall off**, my sovereign liege,  
But by the chance of war. To prove that true  
Needs no more but one tongue for all those wounds,  
Those **mouthèd** wounds, which valiantly he took  
When on the gentle **Severn's sedgy bank**,  
In single opposition, hand to hand,  
He did **confound** the best part of an hour  
In **changing hardiment** with great Glendower.  
Three times they **breathed** and three times did they drink,  
**Upon agreement**, of swift Severn's **flood**;  
Who then, **affrighted** with their bloody looks,  
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,  
And hid his **crisp** head in the **hollow** bank,  
Bloodstainèd with these valiant combatants.  
Never did **base and rotten policy**  
**Colour** her working with such deadly wounds;  
Nor never could the noble Mortimer  
Receive so many, and all willingly.  
Then let him not be **slandered** with **revolt**.

KING HENRY IV    Thou dost **belie** him, Percy, thou dost belie him;  
He never did **encounter** with Glendower.  
I tell thee, he **durst** as well have met the devil alone  
As Owen Glendower for an enemy.  
Art thou not ashamed? But, sirrah, henceforth  
Let me not hear you speak of Mortimer.  
Send me your prisoners with the speediest means,  
Or you shall hear in such a **kind** from me  
As will displease ye.— My lord Northumberland,  
We **license** your departure with your son.—  
Send us your prisoners, or you'll hear of it.

*To Hotspur*

*Exeunt King [Henry, Blunt and train]*

HOTSPUR    **An if** the devil come and roar for them  
I will not send them. I will **after** straight  
And tell him so, for I will ease my heart,  
Although it be **with hazard of** my head.

NORTHUMBERLAND    What? Drunk with **choler**? Stay and pause  
awhile.

Here comes your uncle.

*Enter Worcester*

HOTSPUR    Speak of Mortimer?  
Yes, I will speak of him, and let my soul  
**Want mercy**, if I do not join with him.  
In his behalf I'll empty all these veins,  
And shed my dear blood drop by drop i'th'dust,  
But I will lift the **downfall** Mortimer  
As high i'th'air as this unthankful king,  
As this **ingrate** and **cankered Bullingbrook**.

NORTHUMBERLAND    Brother, the king hath made your nephew  
mad.

WORCESTER    Who struck this **heat** up after I was gone?

HOTSPUR    He will, **forsooth**, have all my prisoners.  
And when I **urged** the ransom once again  
Of my wife's brother, then his cheek looked pale,  
And on my face he turned an **eye of death**,  
Trembling even at the name of Mortimer.



WORCESTER I cannot blame him: was **he** not proclaimed  
By **Richard**, that dead is, the **next of blood**?

NORTHUMBERLAND He was. I heard the proclamation.  
And then it was when the **unhappy** king —  
Whose wrongs **in us** God pardon! — did set forth  
Upon his Irish expedition,  
From whence he **intercepted** did return  
To be deposed and shortly murderèd.

WORCESTER And for whose death we in the world's wide  
mouth

Live scandalized and foully spoken of.

HOTSPUR But **soft**, I pray you; did King Richard then  
Proclaim my **brother** Mortimer  
Heir to the crown?

NORTHUMBERLAND He did. Myself did hear it.

HOTSPUR Nay, then I cannot blame his **cousin** king,  
That wished him on the barren mountains starved.  
But shall it be that you that set the crown  
Upon the head of this forgetful man  
And for his sake wore the detested **blot**  
Of murderous **subornation**, shall it be,  
That you a world of curses undergo,  
Being the agents, or base **second means**,  
The cords, the ladder, or the hangman rather?  
O, pardon if that I descend so low,  
To show the **line** and the **predicament**  
Wherein you **range** under this **subtle** king.  
Shall it for shame be spoken in these days,  
Or fill up chronicles in time to come,  
That men of your nobility and power

Did **gage** them both in an unjust behalf,  
As both of you — God pardon it! — have done,  
To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,  
And plant this thorn, this **canker**, Bullingbrook?  
And shall it in more shame be further spoken,  
That you are **fooled**, discarded and shook off  
By him for whom these shames ye underwent?  
No. Yet time serves wherein you may redeem  
Your banished honours and restore yourselves  
Into the good thoughts of the world again,  
Revenge the jeering and disdained contempt  
Of this proud king, who **studies** day and night  
To **answer** all the debt he owes unto you  
Even with the bloody payment of your deaths:  
Therefore, I say—

WORCESTER Peace, cousin, say no more.  
And now I will **unclasp** a secret book,  
And to your **quick-conceiving** discontents  
I'll read you matter **deep**  
As full of peril and adventurous spirit  
As to **o'er-walk** a current roaring loud  
On the **unsteadfast** footing of a **spear**.

HOTSPUR If he fall in, **goodnight, or sink or swim**.  
Send danger from the east unto the west,  
**So** honour **cross** it from the north to south,  
And let them grapple. The blood more stirs  
To rouse a lion than to start a hare!

NORTHUMBERLAND Imagination of some great exploit

*To Worcester*

Drives him beyond the bounds of patience.

HOTSPUR By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap,  
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon,  
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,  
Where *fathom-line* could never touch the ground,  
And pluck up drownèd honour by the locks,  
So he that doth *redeem* her *thence* might wear  
Without *corrival*, all her dignities:  
But *out upon* this *half-faced fellowship*!

WORCESTER He *apprehends* a world of *figures* here

*To Northumberland*

But not the *form* of what he should *attend*.—  
Good cousin, give me audience for a while and *list* to me.

HOTSPUR I *cry you mercy*.

WORCESTER Those same noble Scots  
That are your prisoners —

HOTSPUR I'll keep them all.  
By heaven, he shall not have a *Scot* of them.  
No, if a Scot would save his soul, he shall not.  
I'll keep them, by this hand.

WORCESTER You start away  
And lend no ear unto my purposes.  
Those prisoners you shall keep.

HOTSPUR Nay, I will; that's flat.  
He said he would not ransom Mortimer,  
Forbade my tongue to speak of Mortimer,  
But I will find him when he lies asleep,  
And in his ear I'll *holla* 'Mortimer!'

Nay, I'll have a starling shall be taught to speak  
Nothing but 'Mortimer', and give it him  
To keep his anger *still* in motion.

WORCESTER Hear you, cousin, a word.

HOTSPUR All studies here I solemnly *defy*,  
Save how to *gall and pinch* this Bullingbrook.  
And that same *sword-and-buckler* Prince of Wales,  
*But that* I think his father loves him not  
And would be glad he met with some *mischance*,  
I would have poisoned him with a pot of ale.

WORCESTER Farewell, kinsman. I'll talk to you  
When you are *better tempered to attend*.

NORTHUMBERLAND Why, what a wasp-tongued and impatient  
fool

*To Hotspur*

Art thou to break into this woman's mood,  
*Tying thine ear to no tongue but thine own!*

HOTSPUR Why, look you, I am whipped and scourged with  
rods,

Nettled and stung with *pismires*, when I hear  
Of this vile *politician*, Bullingbrook.  
In Richard's time — what d'ye call the place? —  
A plague upon't, it is in Gloucestershire,  
'Twas where the madcap *duke his uncle kept*,  
His uncle York, where I first bowed my knee  
Unto this king of smiles, this Bullingbrook,  
When you and he came back from *Ravenspurgh*.

NORTHUMBERLAND At *Berkeley Castle*.

HOTSPUR You say true.

Why, what a **candy deal** of courtesy  
This fawning greyhound then did proffer me.  
'**Look when** his **infant fortune came to age**',  
And 'gentle Harry Percy' and 'kind cousin'.—  
O, the devil take such **cozeners**! — God forgive me,

*To Worcester*

Good uncle, tell your tale, for I have done.

WORCESTER Nay, if you have not, to't again,  
We'll **stay** your leisure.

HOTSPUR I have done, in **sooth**.

WORCESTER Then once more to your Scottish prisoners.  
Deliver them up without their ransom straight,  
And make **the Douglas' son** your only **mean**  
**For powers** in Scotland, which, for **divers** reasons  
Which I shall send you written, be assured  
Will easily be granted.— You, my lord,

*To Northumberland*

Your son in Scotland being thus employed,  
Shall secretly into the **bosom** creep  
Of that same noble **prelate** well beloved,  
The archbishop.

HOTSPUR Of York, is't not?

WORCESTER True, who **bears hard**  
His brother's death at Bristol, the **Lord Scroop**.  
I speak not this in **estimation**  
As what I think might be, but what I know

Is ruminated, plotted and set down,  
And only **stays** but to behold the **face**  
**Of that occasion** that shall bring it on.

HOTSPUR I **smell it**:

Upon my life, it will do wondrous well.

NORTHUMBERLAND **Before the game's afoot, thou still let'st slip.**

HOTSPUR Why, it cannot choose but be a noble plot.  
And then the **power** of Scotland and of York,  
To join with Mortimer, ha?

WORCESTER And so they shall.

HOTSPUR In faith, it is exceedingly well **aimed**.

WORCESTER And 'tis no little reason bids us speed,  
To save our heads by raising of a **head**.  
For, bear ourselves as **even** as we can,  
The king will always think him in our debt,  
And think we think ourselves unsatisfied,  
Till he hath found a time to **pay us home**.  
And see already how he doth begin  
To make us strangers to his looks of love.

HOTSPUR He does, he does. We'll be revenged on him.

WORCESTER Cousin, farewell. No further go in this  
Than I by letters shall direct your course.  
When time is ripe, which will be **suddenly**,  
I'll **steal** to Glendower and Lord Mortimer,  
Where you and Douglas and our powers **at once**,  
As I will fashion it, shall **happily** meet,  
To bear our fortunes in our own strong arms,  
Which now we hold at much uncertainty.

NORTHUMBERLAND    Farewell, good brother. We shall thrive, I trust.

HOTSPUR    Uncle, adieu. O, let the hours be short  
Till **fields** and blows and groans applaud our sport!

*Exeunt*

## Act 2 Scene 1

### *running scene 4*

---

**Location:** *an innyard on the road between London and  
**Canterbury** Carrier delivery-man*

*Enter a Carrier with a lantern in his hand*

FIRST CARRIER    Heigh-ho! An't be not four **by the day**, I'll be  
hanged. **Charles' wain** is over the new chimney, and yet  
our  
horse not **packed**. What, ostler !

OSTLER    **Anon**, anon.

*Within*

FIRST CARRIER    I prithee, **Tom**, **beat Cut's saddle**, put a few  
**flocks**  
in the **point**. The poor **jade** is **wrung in the withers** out of  
all  
cess.

*Enter another Carrier*

SECOND CARRIER    Peas and beans are as dank here as a dog, and this is the next way to give poor jades the bots. This house is turned upside down since Robin the ostler died.

FIRST CARRIER    Poor fellow, never joyed since the price of oats rose. It was the death of him.

SECOND CARRIER    I think this is the most villainous house in all London Road for fleas: I am stung like a tench.

FIRST CARRIER    Like a tench? There is ne'er a king in Christendom could be better bit than I have been since the first cock.

SECOND CARRIER    Why, you will allow us ne'er a jordan, and then we leak in your chimney, and your chamber-lye breeds fleas like a loach.

FIRST CARRIER    What, ostler! Come away and be hanged! Come away!

SECOND CARRIER    I have a gammon of bacon and two razes of ginger, to be delivered as far as Charing Cross.

FIRST CARRIER    The turkeys in my pannier are quite starved. What, ostler! A plague on thee! Hast thou never an eye in thy head? Canst not hear? An 'twere not as good a deed as drink to break the pate of thee, I am a very villain. Come, and be hanged! Hast no faith in thee?



*Enter Gadshill*

GADSHILL Good morrow, carriers. What's o'clock?

FIRST CARRIER I think it be **two o'clock**.

GADSHILL I prithee lend me thy lantern to see my **gelding** in the stable.

FIRST CARRIER Nay, soft, I pray ye; **I know a trick worth two of that**.

GADSHILL I prithee lend me thine.

*To the Second Carrier*

SECOND CARRIER **Ay, when? Can'st tell?** Lend me thy lantern, **quoth a?** Marry, I'll see thee hanged first.

GADSHILL Sirrah carrier, what time do you mean to come to London?

SECOND CARRIER **Time enough to go to bed with a candle, I warrant thee.—** Come, **neighbour Mugs**, we'll **call up** the gentlemen. They will **along with company**, for they have **great charge**.

*Exeunt [Carriers]*

*Enter Chamberlain*

GADSHILL What, ho, Chamberlain?

CHAMBERLAIN **At hand, quoth pick-purse.**

GADSHILL **That's even as fair as** — at hand, quoth the chamberlain, for thou variest no more from picking of purses than **giving direction doth from labouring**. Thou **lay'st the plot how**.

CHAMBERLAIN Good morrow, Master Gadshill. It holds **current** that I told you yesternight: there's a **franklin** in the **wild of Kent** hath brought three hundred marks with him in gold.

I  
heard him tell it to one of his company last night at supper, a  
kind of **auditor**, one that hath **abundance of charge** too,  
God  
knows what. They are up already, and call for **eggs and butter**. They will away **presently**.

GADSHILL Sirrah, if they meet not with **Saint Nicholas' clerks**, I'll give thee this neck.

CHAMBERLAIN No, I'll none of it: I prithee keep that for the hangman, for I know thou worship'st Saint Nicholas as truly  
as a man of falsehood may.

GADSHILL What talkest thou to me of the hangman? If I hang, I'll make a fat pair of gallows, for if I hang, old Sir John hangs  
with me, and thou know'st he's no **starveling**. Tut, there are  
other **Trojans** that thou dream'st not of, **the which** for sport  
sake are content to do the **profession** some grace; that would,  
if matters should be looked into, for their own credit sake, **make all whole**. I am joined with no **foot-land rakers**, no **long-staff sixpenny strikers**, none of these mad **mustachio purple-hued malt-worms**, but with nobility and tranquillity,  
**burgomasters** and great **oneyers**, such as can **hold in**, such

as will strike sooner than speak, and speak sooner than drink, and drink sooner than pray. And yet, I lie, for they pray continually unto their saint, the **commonwealth**; or rather not to pray to her, but prey on her, for they **ride** up and down on her and make her their **boots**.

CHAMBERLAIN What, the commonwealth their boots? Will she **hold out water in foul way**?

GADSHILL She will, she will; justice hath **liquored** her. We steal **as in a castle, cocksure**. We have the **receipt of fern-seed**, we walk invisible.

CHAMBERLAIN Nay, I think rather you are more beholding to the night than to fern-seed for your walking invisible.

GADSHILL Give me thy hand. Thou shalt have a share in our purpose, as I am a **true** man.

CHAMBERLAIN Nay, rather let me have it, as you are a false thief.

GADSHILL Go to. **88 Homo** is a **common name to** all men. Bid the ostler bring the gelding out of the stable. Farewell, ye **muddy** knave.

*Exeunt*

## Act 2 Scene 2

*running scene 5*

---

*Location: the highway near Gad's Hill*

*Enter Prince, Poins and Peto [and Bardolph]*

POINS Come, shelter, shelter. I have removed Falstaff's horse, and he frets like a gummed velvet.

PRINCE HENRY Stand close.

*Poins, Peto and Bardolph stand aside*

*Enter Falstaff*

FALSTAFF Poins! Poins, and be hanged! Poins!

PRINCE HENRY Peace, ye fat-kidneyed rascal. What a brawling dost thou keep!

FALSTAFF What, Poins? Hal?

PRINCE HENRY He is walked up to the top of the hill.  
I'll go seek him.

*Stands aside with the others*

FALSTAFF I am accursed to rob in that thief's company. That rascal hath removed my horse, and tied him I know not where. If I travel but four foot by the square further afoot, I shall break my wind. Well, I doubt not but to die a fair death

for all this, if I scape hanging for killing that rogue. I have  
forsworn his company hourly any time this two-and-  
twenty  
year, and yet I am bewitched with the rogue's company. If  
the  
rascal have not given me medicines to make me love him,  
I'll  
be hanged; it could not be else: I have drunk medicines.  
Poins,  
Hal, a plague upon you both! Bardolph! Peto! I'll starve  
ere I  
rob a foot further. An 'twere not as good a deed as to  
drink, to  
turn true man and to leave these rogues, I am the veriest  
varlet that ever chewed with a tooth. Eight yards of  
uneven  
ground is threescore and ten miles afoot with me, and the  
stony-hearted villains know it well enough. A plague  
upon't  
when thieves cannot be true one to another!

*They whistle*

Whew! A plague light upon you all!

*The Prince, Poins, Peto and Bardolph come forward*

Give me my horse, you rogues. Give me  
my horse, and be hanged!

PRINCE HENRY Peace, ye fat-guts! Lie down, lay thine ear close  
to  
the ground and list if thou can hear the tread of travellers.

FALSTAFF Have you any levers to lift me up again, being down?

I'll not bear mine own flesh so far afoot again for all the coin

in thy father's *exchequer*. What a plague mean ye to *colt* me thus?

PRINCE HENRY Thou liest. Thou art not colted, thou art *uncolted*.

FALSTAFF I prithee, good Prince Hal, help me *to* my horse, good king's son.

PRINCE HENRY Out, you rogue! Shall I be your ostler?

FALSTAFF Go, hang thyself in thine own *heir-apparent garters*! If I be ta'en, I'll *peach* for this. An I have not *ballads made on*

*all* and sung to *filthy* tunes, let a cup of sack be my poison.

When a jest is so *forward*, and *afoot* too! I hate it.

*Enter Gadshill*

GADSHILL Stand.

FALSTAFF So I do, against my will.

POINS O, 'tis our *setter*. I know his voice.

BARDOLPH What news?

GADSHILL *Case ye*, case ye; on with your vizards. There's money

of the king's coming down the hill, 'tis going to the king's exchequer.

FALSTAFF You lie, you rogue, 'tis going to the King's Tavern.

GADSHILL There's enough to **make us all**.

FALSTAFF To be hanged.

PRINCE HENRY You four shall **front** them in the narrow lane.

Ned and I will walk **lower**; if they scape from your encounter,

then they **light on** us.

PETO But how many **be** of them?

GADSHILL Some eight or ten.

FALSTAFF Will they not rob us?

PRINCE HENRY What, a coward, Sir John Paunch?

FALSTAFF Indeed, I am not John of **Gaunt**, your grandfather;  
but yet no coward, Hal.

PRINCE HENRY We'll leave that to the **proof**.

POINS Sirrah Jack, thy horse stands behind the hedge.

When thou need'st him, there thou shalt find him.

Farewell,

and stand fast.

FALSTAFF Now cannot I strike him, if I should be hanged.

PRINCE HENRY Ned, where are our disguises?

*To Poins*

POINS Here, **hard** by. Stand close.

*To Prince Henry*

*[Exeunt Prince Henry and Poins]*

FALSTAFF Now, my masters, **happy man be his dole**, say I.  
Every man to his business.

*Enter Travellers*

FIRST TRAVELLER Come, **neighbour**. The boy shall lead our  
horses

down the hill. We'll walk afoot awhile, and ease our legs.

THIEVES Stay!

TRAVELLERS Jesu bless us!

FALSTAFF Strike, down with them! Cut the villains' throats.

Ah, **whoreson caterpillars**, **bacon-fed** knaves! They hate us  
**youth**, down with them, fleece them.

TRAVELLERS O, we are **undone**, both we and ours for ever!

FALSTAFF Hang ye, **gorbellied** knaves, are you undone? No, ye  
fat **chuffs**, I would your **store** were here! On, **bacons**, on!  
What, ye knaves? Young men must live. You are **grand-**  
**jurors**, are ye? We'll **jure** ye, i'faith.

*Here they rob them and bind them [Exeunt]*

*Enter the Prince and Poins*

PRINCE HENRY The thieves have bound the true men. Now  
could

thou and I rob the thieves and go merrily to London, it  
would

be **argument** for a week, laughter for a month and a good  
jest

for ever.



POINS Stand close. I hear them coming.

*Enter Thieves again*

FALSTAFF Come, **my masters**, let us share, and then to horse  
before day. An the prince and Poins be not two **arrant**  
cowards, there's no **equity stirring**. There's no more  
valour  
in that Poins than in a **wild duck**.

PRINCE HENRY Your money!

POINS Villains!

*As they are sharing, the Prince and Poins set upon them. They  
all run  
away, leaving the booty behind them*

PRINCE HENRY Got with much ease. Now merrily to horse.  
The thieves are scattered and possessed with fear  
So strongly that they dare not meet each other:  
Each takes his fellow for an officer.  
Away, good Ned. Falstaff sweats to death,  
And **lards** the lean earth as he walks along.  
Were't not for laughing, I should pity him.

POINS How the rogue roared!

*Exeunt*

**Act 2 Scene 3**

**Location:** Hotspur's estate (historically, Warkworth Castle in Northumberland)

*Enter Hotspur, **solus**, reading a letter*

HOTSPUR 'But for mine own part, my lord, I could be well contented to be there, in respect of the love I bear your **house**.' He could be contented: why is he not, then? In respect of the love he bears our house. He shows in this, he loves his own barn better than he loves our house. Let me see some more. 'The purpose you undertake is dangerous' — why, that's certain: 'tis dangerous to take a cold, to sleep, to drink. But I tell you, my lord fool, out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety. 'The purpose you undertake is dangerous, the friends you have named **uncertain**, the time itself **unsorted** and your whole plot too light for the **counterpoise** of so **great** an opposition.' Say you so, say you so? I say unto you again, you are a shallow cowardly **hind**, and you lie. What a **lack-brain** is this? I **protest**, our plot is as good a plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant: a

good plot, good friends, and full of **expectation**. An excellent

plot, very good friends. What a frosty-spirited rogue is this?

Why, my **lord of York** commends the plot and the general course of the action. By this hand if I were now by this rascal, I could **brain him with his lady's fan**. Is there not my

father, my uncle and myself, Lord Edmund Mortimer, my lord of York and Owen Glendower? Is there not besides the

Douglas? Have I not all their letters to meet me in arms by the

ninth of the next month? And are they not some of them set

forward already? What a pagan rascal is this? An infidel! Ha,

you shall see now **in very sincerity of** fear and cold heart, will he to the king and lay open all our proceedings. O, I could divide myself and **go to buffets**, for **moving such a dish**

**of skimmed milk** with so honourable an **action**! Hang him. Let him tell the king we are **prepared**. I will set forwards tonight.

*Enter his Lady*

How now, Kate? I must leave you within these two hours.

LADY PERCY O, my good lord, why are you thus alone?

For what offence have I this fortnight been

A banished woman from my Harry's bed?

Tell me, sweet lord, what is't that takes from thee  
Thy **stomach** , pleasure and thy golden sleep?  
Why dost thou bend thine eyes upon the earth,  
And start so often when thou sit'st alone?  
Why hast thou lost the fresh blood in thy cheeks,  
And given my **treasures and my rights** of thee  
To **thick-eyed** musing and cursed melancholy?  
In my **faint** slumbers I by thee have **watched**,  
And heard thee murmur tales of iron wars,  
Speak **terms of manage** to thy bounding steed,  
Cry 'Courage! To the field!' And thou hast talked  
Of **sallies and retires**, trenches, tents,  
Of **palisadoes**, frontiers, parapets,  
Of **basilisks**, of cannon, **culverin**,  
Of prisoners' ransom and of soldiers slain,  
And all the current of a **heady** fight.  
Thy spirit within thee hath been so at war  
And thus hath so bestirred thee in thy sleep,  
That beads of sweat hath stood upon thy brow  
Like bubbles in a late-disturbèd stream;  
And in thy face strange **motions** have appeared,  
Such as we see when men **restrain** their breath  
On some great sudden haste. O, what portents are these?  
Some **heavy** business hath my lord in hand,  
And I must know it, else he loves me not.

HOTSPUR    **What, ho!**

*[Enter a Servant]*

Is **Gilliams** with the **packet** gone?

SERVANT    He is, my lord, an hour ago.

HOTSPUR Hath **Butler** brought those horses from the sheriff?

SERVANT One horse, my lord, he brought **even** now.

HOTSPUR What horse? A **roan**, a **crop-ear**, is it not?

SERVANT It is, my lord.

HOTSPUR That roan shall be my throne.

Well, I will **back** him **straight**. *Esperance!*

Bid Butler lead him forth into the park.

*[Exit Servant]*

LADY PERCY But hear you, my lord.

HOTSPUR What say'st thou, my lady?

LADY PERCY What is it **carries you away**?

HOTSPUR Why, my horse, my love, my horse.

LADY PERCY Out, you mad-headed ape!

A **weasel** hath not such a deal of **spleen**

As you are tossed with. In sooth,

I'll know your business, Harry, that I will.

I fear my brother Mortimer doth **stir**

About his **title**, and hath sent for you

To **line** his enterprise. But if you go—

HOTSPUR So far afoot, I shall be weary, love.

LADY PERCY Come, come, you **paraquito**, answer me

Directly unto this question that I shall ask:

Indeed, I'll break thy **little finger**, Harry,

If thou wilt not tell me true.

HOTSPUR Away,

Away, you **trifler**! Love? I love thee not.

I care not for thee, Kate. This is no world

To play with **mammets** and to **tilt** with lips.  
We must have bloody noses and cracked **crowns**,  
And **pass them current** too.— **God's me**, my horse!

What say'st thou, Kate? What wouldst thou have with me?

LADY PERCY Do ye not love me? Do ye not, indeed?

Well, do not then, for since you love me not,  
I will not love myself. Do you not love me?  
Nay, tell me if thou speak'st in jest or no.

HOTSPUR Come, wilt thou see me ride?

And when I am a-horseback, I will swear  
I love thee infinitely. But hark you, Kate,  
I must not have you henceforth question me  
Whither I go, nor reason **whereabout**.  
Whither I must, I must. And to conclude,  
This evening must I leave thee, gentle Kate.  
I know you wise, but yet no further wise  
Than Harry Percy's wife. **Constant** you are,  
But yet a woman: and for secrecy,  
No lady **closer**, for I well believe  
Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,  
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate.

LADY PERCY How? So far?

HOTSPUR Not an inch further. But hark you, Kate:

Whither I go, thither shall you go too.  
Today will I set forth, tomorrow you.  
Will this content you, Kate?

LADY PERCY It must of **force**.

*Exeunt*

## Act 2 Scene 4

*running scene 7*

---

*Location: a tavern in Eastcheap, London*

*Enter Prince and Poins*

PRINCE HENRY    Ned, prithee come out of that **fat** room, and  
**lend**  
    **me thy hand** to laugh a little.

POINS    Where hast been, Hal?

PRINCE HENRY    With three or four **loggerheads** amongst **three or**  
    **fourscore hogsheads**. I have **sounded the very base-string**  
**of**  
    **humility**. Sirrah, I am **sworn brother** to a **leash** of **drawers**,  
    and can call them by their names, as Tom, Dick and  
**Francis**.

    They take it already upon their confidence that though I  
be

    but Prince of Wales, yet I am the king of courtesy, telling  
me

    flatly I am no **proud Jack** like **Falstaff**, but a **Corinthian**, a  
lad

    of **mettle**, a good boy, and when I am king of England, I  
shall

    command all the good lads in Eastcheap. They call  
drinking

    deep, **dyeing scarlet**; and when you **breathe in your**  
    **watering**, then they cry '**Hem!**' and bid you **play it off**. To

    conclude, I am so good a proficient in one quarter of an  
hour

that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during

my life. I tell thee, Ned, thou hast lost much honour that thou wert not with me in this action. But, sweet Ned — to sweeten which name of Ned, I give thee this pennyworth of

sugar, clapped even now into my hand by an under-skinker,

one that never spake other English in his life than ‘Eight shillings and sixpence’ and ‘You are welcome’, with this shrill addition, ‘Anon, anon, sir!— Score a pint of bastard in

the Half-Moon’, or so. But, Ned, to drive away time till Falstaff come, I prithee do thou stand in some by-room while

I question my puny drawer to what end he gave me the sugar

and do never leave calling ‘Francis’, that his tale to me may

be nothing but ‘Anon’. Step aside, and I’ll show thee a precedent.

POINS Francis!

PRINCE HENRY Thou art perfect.

POINS Francis!

*[Exit Poins]*

*Enter Drawer [Francis]*

FRANCIS Anon, anon, sir.— Look down into the Pomgarnet, Ralph.



PRINCE HENRY Come hither, Francis.

FRANCIS My lord?

PRINCE HENRY How long hast thou to serve, Francis?

FRANCIS Forsooth, five years, and as much as to—

POINS Francis!

*Within*

FRANCIS Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE HENRY Five years. By'r lady, a long lease for the clinking

of pewter. But Francis, darest thou be so valiant as to play the coward with thy indenture and show it a fair pair of heels and run from it?

FRANCIS O lord, sir, I'll be sworn upon all the books in England, I could find in my heart—

POINS Francis!

*Within*

FRANCIS Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE HENRY How old art thou, Francis?

FRANCIS Let me see — about Michaelmas next I shall be—

POINS Francis!

*Within*

FRANCIS Anon, sir.— Pray you stay a little, my lord.

PRINCE HENRY Nay, but hark you, Francis, for the sugar thou gavest me, 'twas a pennyworth, was't not?

FRANCIS O lord, sir, I would it had been two!

PRINCE HENRY I will give thee for it a thousand pound. Ask me  
when thou wilt, and thou shalt have it.

POINS Francis!

*Within*

FRANCIS Anon, anon.

PRINCE HENRY Anon, Francis? No, Francis. But tomorrow,  
Francis, or, Francis, on Thursday, or indeed, Francis,  
when  
thou wilt. But, Francis!

FRANCIS My lord?

PRINCE HENRY Wilt thou rob this leathern jerkin, crystal-  
button, not-pated, agate-ring, puke-stocking, caddis-  
garter,  
smooth-tongue, Spanish-pouch—

FRANCIS O lord, sir, who do you mean?

PRINCE HENRY Why, then, your brown bastard is your only  
drink, for look you, Francis, your white canvas doublet  
will  
sully. In Barbary, sir, it cannot come to so much.

FRANCIS What, sir?

POINS Francis!

*Within*

PRINCE HENRY Away, you rogue! Dost thou hear them call?

*Here they both call him. The Drawer stands amazed, not knowing which way to go*

*Enter Vintner*

VINTNER What, stand'st thou still, and hear'st such a calling?  
Look to the guests within.

*[Exit Francis]*

My lord, old Sir John, with half-a-dozen more, are at the door: shall I let them in?

PRINCE HENRY Let them alone awhile, and then open the door.  
Poins!

*[Exit Vintner]*

*Enter Poins*

POINS Anon, anon, sir.

PRINCE HENRY Sirrah, Falstaff and the rest of the thieves are at the door. Shall we be merry?

POINS As merry as crickets, my lad. But hark ye: what cunning match have you made with this jest of the drawer?

Come, what's the issue?

PRINCE HENRY I am now of all humours that have showed themselves humours since the old days of goodman Adam to the pupil age of this present twelve o'clock at midnight.

[Enter Francis]

What's o'clock, Francis?

FRANCIS    *Anon*, anon, sir.

[Exit]

PRINCE HENRY    That ever this fellow should have fewer words than

          a parrot, and *yet* the son of a woman! His *industry* is upstairs

          and downstairs, his eloquence *the parcel of a reckoning*. I am

          not yet of Percy's *mind*, the Hotspur of the north, he that *kills*

*me* some six or seven dozen of Scots at a breakfast, washes his

          hands, and says to his wife 'Fie upon this quiet life! I want work'. 'O my sweet Harry', says she, 'how many hast thou killed today?' 'Give my roan horse a *drench*', says he, and answers 'Some fourteen', an hour after, 'a trifle, a trifle'. I

          prithee call in Falstaff. I'll play Percy, and that damned *brawn*

          shall play Dame Mortimer his wife. '*Rivo!*' says the drunkard.

          Call in *ribs*, call in *tallow*.

*Poins calls*

*Enter Falstaff, [Gadshill, Bardolph and Peto. Francis follows with*

*wine]*

POINS Welcome, Jack. Where hast thou been?

FALSTAFF A plague of all cowards, I say, and a vengeance too, marry and amen!— Give me a cup of sack, boy.— Ere I lead this life long, I'll sew nether stocks and mend them and foot them too. A plague of all cowards!— Give me

*To Francis*

a cup of sack, rogue. Is there no virtue extant?

*Drinks*

PRINCE HENRY Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter — pitiful-hearted Titan — that melted at the sweet tale of the sun? If thou didst, then behold that compound.

FALSTAFF You rogue, here's lime in this sack too.—

*To Francis*

There is nothing but roguery to be found in villainous man; yet a coward is worse than a cup of sack with lime in't. A villainous coward! Go

*[Francis may exit]*

thy ways, old Jack, die when thou wilt, if manhood, good manhood, be not forgot upon the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring. There lives not three good men

unchanged in England, and one of them is fat and grows old.

God help the **while**! A bad world, I say. I would I were a **weaver**. I could sing all manner of songs. A plague of all cowards, I say still.

PRINCE HENRY How now, **wool-sack**, what mutter you?

FALSTAFF A king's son? If I do not beat thee out of thy kingdom with a **dagger of lath**, and drive all thy subjects afore thee like a flock of wild geese, **I'll never wear hair on my face more**. You Prince of Wales?

PRINCE HENRY Why, you whoreson **round** man, what's the matter?

FALSTAFF Are you not a coward? Answer me to that. And Poins there?

POINS Ye fat paunch, an ye call me coward, I'll stab thee.

FALSTAFF I call thee coward? I'll see thee damned ere I call thee coward, but I would give a thousand pound I could run as fast as thou canst. You are straight enough in the shoulders, you care not who sees your back. Call you that **backing** of your friends? A plague upon such backing! Give

me them that will **face** me. Give me a cup of sack. I am a rogue, if I **drunk** today.

PRINCE HENRY O, villain, thy lips are scarce wiped since thou drunk'st last.

FALSTAFF **All's one for that**.

A plague of all cowards, still say I.

PRINCE HENRY What's the matter?

FALSTAFF What's the matter? Here be four of us have *ta'en* a thousand pound this morning.

PRINCE HENRY Where is it, Jack? Where is it?

FALSTAFF Where is it? Taken from us it is: a hundred upon *poor* four of us.

PRINCE HENRY What, a hundred, man?

FALSTAFF I am a rogue, if I were not *at half-sword* with a dozen of them two hours together. I have scaped by miracle.

I am eight times thrust through the doublet, four through the *hose*, my *buckler* cut through and through, my sword hacked *like a hand-saw* — *ecce signum!* I never *dealt* better

since I was a man: *all would not do*. A plague of all cowards!

Let them speak; if they speak more or less than truth, they are villains and the *sons of darkness*.

PRINCE HENRY Speak, sirs, how was it?

GADSHILL We four set upon some dozen—

FALSTAFF Sixteen at least, my lord.

GADSHILL And bound them.

PETO No, no, they were not bound.

FALSTAFF You rogue, they were bound, every man of them, or I am a Jew else, an *Ebrew Jew*.

GADSHILL As we were sharing, some six or seven fresh men set

upon us—

FALSTAFF And unbound the rest, and then **come in the other**.

PRINCE HENRY What, fought ye with them all?

FALSTAFF All? I know not what ye call all, but if I fought not with fifty of them, I am a bunch of radish: if there were not

two or three and fifty upon poor old Jack, then am I no two-

legged creature.

POINS Pray heaven you have not murdered some of them.

FALSTAFF Nay, that's past praying for, I have **peppered** two of them: two I am sure I have **paid**, two rogues in **buckram** suits. I tell thee what, Hal, if I tell thee a lie, spit in my face,

call me horse. Thou knowest my old **ward**. Here I **lay** and thus I **bore my point**. Four rogues in buckram let drive at me—

PRINCE HENRY What, four? Thou saidst but two even now.

FALSTAFF Four, Hal, I told thee four.

POINS Ay, ay, he said four.

FALSTAFF These four came all **a-front**, and **mainly** thrust at me. I **made no more ado** but took all their seven **points** in my **target**, thus.

PRINCE HENRY Seven? Why, there were but four even now.

FALSTAFF In buckram?

POINS Ay, four, in buckram suits.



FALSTAFF Seven, by *these hilts*, or I am a villain else.

PRINCE HENRY Prithee let him alone. We shall

*Aside to Poins*

have more anon.

FALSTAFF Dost thou hear me, Hal?

PRINCE HENRY Ay, and *mark* thee too, Jack.

FALSTAFF Do so, for it is worth the listening to. These nine in buckram that I told thee of—

PRINCE HENRY So, two more already.

FALSTAFF Their *points* being broken—

POINS Down fell his *hose*.

FALSTAFF Began to *give me ground*. But I followed me close, came in *foot and hand*; and *with a thought* seven of the eleven I paid.

PRINCE HENRY O, monstrous! Eleven buckram men grown out of two?

FALSTAFF But, as the devil would have it, three *misbegotten* knaves in *Kendal green* came at my back and *let drive at* me;

for it was so dark, Hal, that thou couldst not see thy hand.

PRINCE HENRY These lies are like the *father* that *begets* them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable. Why, thou *clay-brained*

guts, thou *knotty-pated* fool, thou whoreson, obscene, greasy *tallow-catch*—

FALSTAFF What, art thou mad? Art thou mad? Is not the truth the truth?

PRINCE HENRY Why, how couldst thou know these men in Kendal green when it was so dark thou couldst not see thy hand? Come, tell us your reason: what say'st thou to this?

POINS Come, your reason, Jack, your reason.

FALSTAFF What, upon compulsion? No. Were I at the strappado, or all the racks in the world, I would not tell you

on compulsion. Give you a reason on compulsion? If reasons

were as plentiful as blackberries, I would give no man a reason upon compulsion, I.

PRINCE HENRY I'll be no longer guilty of this sin. This sanguine coward, this bed-presser, this horseback-breaker, this huge hill of flesh—

FALSTAFF Away, you starveling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's tongue, bull's pizzle, you stock-fish! O, for breath to utter what is like thee! You tailor's-yard, you sheath, you bowcase, you vile standing-tuck—

PRINCE HENRY Well, breathe awhile, and then to't again: and when thou hast tired thyself in base comparisons, hear me speak but thus.

POINS Mark, Jack.

PRINCE HENRY We two saw you four set on four and bound them, and were masters of their wealth. Mark now, how a plain tale shall put you down. Then did we two set on you four, and with a word, out-faced you from your prize, and

have it, yea, and can show it you in the house. And,  
Falstaff,

you carried your guts away as nimbly, with as quick  
dexterity, and roared for mercy and still ran and roared,  
as

ever I heard bull-calf. What a [slave](#) art thou, to hack thy  
sword as thou hast done, and then say it was in fight!  
What

trick, what device, what [starting-hole](#) canst thou now find  
out to hide thee from this open and [apparent](#) shame?

POINS Come, let's hear, Jack: what trick hast thou now?

FALSTAFF I [knew](#) ye as well as he that made ye. Why, hear ye,  
my masters, was it for me to kill the heir-apparent?  
Should I

turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knowest I am as  
valiant as [Hercules](#), but beware [instinct](#). The [lion will not  
touch the true prince](#). Instinct is a great matter. I was a  
coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and  
thee during my life: I for a valiant lion, and thou for a  
true

prince. But, lads, I am glad you have the money.—  
Hostess,

[clap to](#) the doors. [Watch](#) tonight, pray tomorrow.  
[Gallants](#),

lads, boys, [hearts](#) of gold, all the good titles of fellowship  
come to you! What, shall we be merry? Shall we have a  
play  
[extempore](#)?

PRINCE HENRY Content, and the [argument](#) shall be thy running  
away.

FALSTAFF Ah, no more of [that](#), Hal, [an](#) thou lovest me!

*Enter Hostess [Quickly]*

HOSTESS QUICKLY My lord the prince?

PRINCE HENRY How now, my lady the hostess? What say'st thou  
to me?

HOSTESS QUICKLY Marry, my lord, there is a nobleman of the  
court at door would speak with you: he says he comes  
from  
your father.

PRINCE HENRY Give him as much as will make him a royal  
man, and  
send him back again to my mother.

FALSTAFF What manner of man is he?

HOSTESS QUICKLY An old man.

FALSTAFF What doth gravity out of his bed at midnight? Shall  
I give him his answer?

PRINCE HENRY Prithee do, Jack.

FALSTAFF 'Faith, and I'll send him packing.

*Exit*

PRINCE HENRY Now, sirs: you fought fair; so did you, Peto, so  
did  
you, Bardolph. You are lions too, you ran away upon  
instinct. You will not touch the true prince; no, fie!

BARDOLPH 'Faith, I ran when I saw others run.

PRINCE HENRY Tell me now in earnest, how came Falstaff's  
sword so hacked?

PETO Why, he hacked it with his dagger, and said he would swear truth out of England but he would make you believe it was done in fight, and persuaded us to do the like.

BARDOLPH Yea, and to tickle our noses with spear-grass to make them bleed, and then to beslubber our garments with it and swear it was the blood of true men. I did that I did not this seven years before, I blushed to hear his monstrous devices.

PRINCE HENRY O, villain, thou stolest a cup of sack eighteen years ago, and wert taken with the manner, and ever since thou hast blushed extempore. Thou hadst fire and sword on thy side, and yet thou ran'st away; what instinct hadst thou for it?

BARDOLPH My lord, do you see these meteors? Do you behold these exhalations?

PRINCE HENRY I do.

BARDOLPH What think you they portend?

PRINCE HENRY Hot livers and cold purses.

BARDOLPH Choler, my lord, if rightly taken.

PRINCE HENRY No, if rightly taken, halter.

*Enter Falstaff*

Here comes lean Jack, here comes bare-bone.— How now,

my sweet creature of bombast? How long is't ago, Jack, since

thou saw'st thine own knee?

FALSTAFF My own knee? When I was about thy years, Hal, I

was not an eagle's talon in the waist. I could have crept into

any alderman's thumb-ring. A plague of sighing and grief ! It

blows a man up like a bladder. There's villainous news abroad: here was Sir John Braby from your father; you must

go to the court in the morning. That same mad fellow of the

north, Percy, and he of Wales that gave Amamon the bastinado and made Lucifer cuckold and swore the devil his

true liegeman upon the cross of a Welsh hook — what a plague call you him?

POINS O, Glendower.

FALSTAFF Owen, Owen the same, and his son-in-law Mortimer,

and old Northumberland, and that sprightly Scot of Scots, Douglas, that runs o'horseback up a hill perpendicular—

PRINCE HENRY He that rides at high speed and with a pistol kills

a sparrow flying.

FALSTAFF You have hit it.

PRINCE HENRY So did he never the sparrow.

FALSTAFF Well, that rascal hath good **mettle** in him. He will not **run**.

PRINCE HENRY Why, what a rascal art thou then, to praise him so for **running**?

FALSTAFF A-horseback, ye **cuckoo**, but afoot he will not budge a foot.

PRINCE HENRY Yes, Jack, upon instinct.

FALSTAFF I grant ye, upon instinct. Well, he is there too, and one Mordake, and a thousand **blue-caps** more. Worcester is  
stolen away by night. Thy father's beard is turned white with  
the news; **you may buy land now as cheap as stinking mackerel**.

PRINCE HENRY Then 'tis **like**, if there come a **hot** sun and this civil **buffeting hold**, we shall buy **maidenheads as they buy  
hob-nails, by the hundreds**.

FALSTAFF By the mass, lad, thou say'st true. It is like we shall have good **trading** that way. But tell me, Hal, art not thou horrible afraid? Thou being heir apparent, could the world  
pick thee out three such enemies again as that fiend Douglas, that **spirit** Percy, and that devil Glendower? Art not  
thou horrible afraid? Doth not thy blood **thrill** at it?

PRINCE HENRY Not a whit, I lack some of thy instinct.

FALSTAFF Well, thou wilt be horrible **chid** tomorrow when thou comest to thy father: if thou do love me, practise an answer.

PRINCE HENRY Do thou stand for my father, and examine me upon the particulars of my life.

FALSTAFF Shall I? Content. This chair shall be my state, this dagger my sceptre and this cushion my crown.

PRINCE HENRY Thy state is taken for a joint-stool, thy golden sceptre for a leaden dagger, and thy precious rich crown for a pitiful bald crown.

FALSTAFF Well, an the fire of grace be not quite out of thee, now shalt thou be moved. Give me a cup of sack to make mine eyes look red, that it may be thought I have wept, for I must speak in passion, and I will do it in King Cambyse's vein.

PRINCE HENRY Well, here is my leg.

*He bows or kneels*

FALSTAFF And here is my speech. Stand aside, nobility.

HOSTESS QUICKLY This is excellent sport, i'faith!

FALSTAFF Weep not, sweet queen, for trickling tears are vain.

HOSTESS QUICKLY O, the father, how he holds his countenance!

FALSTAFF For God's sake, lords, convey my tristful queen, For tears do stop the flood-gates of her eyes.

HOSTESS QUICKLY O, rare, he doth it as like one of these harlotry players as ever I see!

FALSTAFF Peace, good pint-pot, peace, good



↓Quickly may exit, perhaps escorted by Bardolph↓

**tickle-brain**.— Harry, I do not only marvel  
where thou spendest thy time, but also how  
thou art accompanied, for though the **camomile**, the more  
it

is trodden the faster it grows, yet youth, the more it is  
wasted

the sooner it wears. Thou art my son, I have partly thy  
mother's word, partly my opinion, but chiefly a villainous  
**trick** of thine eye and a **foolish hanging of thy nether lip**  
that

doth **warrant** me. If then thou be son to me, here lieth the  
point: why, being son to me, art thou so **pointed at**? Shall  
the

blessed **sun** of heaven prove a **micher** and eat  
blackberries?

A question not to be asked. Shall the son of England prove  
a

thief and take purses? A question to be asked. There is a  
thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of and it is  
known

to many in our land by the name of **pitch**: this pitch, as  
ancient writers do report, doth **defile**; so doth the  
company

thou keepest. For, Harry, now I do not speak to thee in  
drink

but in tears: not in pleasure but in **passion**: not in words  
only,

but in woes also. And yet there is a virtuous man whom I

have often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

PRINCE HENRY What manner of man, **an it like** your majesty?

FALSTAFF A goodly **portly** man, i'faith, and a **corpulent**: of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most **noble carriage**, and

as I think, his age some fifty, or, by'r lady, inclining to **threescore**; and now I remember me, his name is Falstaff. If

that man should be **lewdly given**, he deceives me; for, Harry,

I see virtue in his looks. If then the tree may be known by the

fruit, as the fruit by the tree, then **peremptorily** I speak it, there is virtue in that Falstaff: him keep with, the rest banish.

And tell me now, thou **naughty** varlet, tell me, where hast thou been this month?

PRINCE HENRY Dost thou speak like a king? Do thou stand for me, and I'll play my father.

FALSTAFF Depose me? If thou dost it half so gravely, so majestically, both in word and matter, hang me up by the heels for a **rabbit-sucker** or a **poulter's hare**.

PRINCE HENRY Well, here I am **set**.

FALSTAFF And here I stand. **Judge, my masters**.

PRINCE HENRY Now, Harry, whence come you?

FALSTAFF My noble lord, from Eastcheap.

PRINCE HENRY The complaints I hear of thee are grievous.

FALSTAFF I'faith, my lord, they are false. — Nay, I'll tickle ye for a young prince.

PRINCE HENRY Swearest thou, ungracious boy? Henceforth ne'er

look on me. Thou art violently carried away from grace: there

is a devil haunts thee in the likeness of a fat old man; a tun of man is thy companion. Why dost thou converse with

that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that

swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that

stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted Manningtree ox with

the pudding in his belly, that reverend Vice, that grey Iniquity,

that father Ruffian, that Vanity in years? Wherein is he good,

but to taste sack and drink it? Wherein neat and cleanly, but

to carve a capon and eat it? Wherein cunning, but in craft?

Wherein crafty, but in villainy? Wherein villainous, but in all

things? Wherein worthy, but in nothing?

FALSTAFF I would your grace would take me with you: whom means your grace?

PRINCE HENRY That villainous abominable misleader of youth, Falstaff, that old white-bearded Satan.

FALSTAFF My lord, the man I know.

PRINCE HENRY I know thou dost.

FALSTAFF But to say I know more harm in him than in myself, were to say more than I know. That he is old, the more the

pity, his white hairs do witness it. But that he is, *saving your*

*reverence*, a *whoremaster*, that I utterly deny. If sack and sugar be a fault, heaven help the wicked: if to be old and merry be a sin, then many an old *host* that I know is damned: if to be fat be to be hated, then *Pharaoh's lean kine*

are to be loved. No, my good lord, banish Peto, banish Bardolph, banish Poins, but for sweet Jack Falstaff, kind Jack

Falstaff, true Jack Falstaff, valiant Jack Falstaff, and therefore

more valiant, being, as he is old Jack Falstaff, banish not him

thy Harry's company, banish not him thy Harry's company:

banish plump Jack, and banish all the world.

PRINCE HENRY I do, I will.

*Knocking*

*Enter Bardolph, running*

BARDOLPH O, my lord, my lord! The sheriff with a most *monstrous watch* is at the door.

FALSTAFF Out, you rogue!— Play out the play: I have much to say in the behalf of that Falstaff.

*Enter the Hostess [Quickly]*

HOSTESS QUICKLY O, my lord, my lord!

PRINCE HENRY Heigh, heigh! *The devil rides upon a fiddlestick.*  
What's the matter?

HOSTESS QUICKLY The sheriff and all the watch are at the door:  
they are come to search the house. Shall I let them in?

FALSTAFF Dost thou hear, Hal? Never call a true piece of gold  
a  
counterfeit: *thou art essentially made, without seeming so.*

PRINCE HENRY And thou a natural coward, without instinct.

FALSTAFF I *deny your major*. If you will *deny the* sheriff, *so*: if  
not, let him enter: if I *become* not a *cart* as well as  
another  
man, a plague on my *bringing up*! I hope I shall as *soon*  
be  
strangled with a halter as another.

PRINCE HENRY Go, hide thee behind the *arras*. The rest *walk up*  
*above*. Now, my masters, for a *true* face and good  
conscience.

FALSTAFF Both which I have had: but their *date*

*Falstaff hides behind the arras*

is out, and therefore I'll hide me.

PRINCE HENRY Call in the sheriff.

*Exeunt [all except Prince Henry and Peto]*

*Enter Sheriff and the Carrier*

Now, master sheriff, what is your will with me?

SHERIFF First, pardon me, my lord. A **hue and cry**  
Hath followed certain men unto this house.

PRINCE HENRY What men?

SHERIFF One of them is well known, my gracious lord,  
A gross fat man.

CARRIER As fat as butter.

PRINCE HENRY The man, I do assure you, is not here,  
For I myself at this time have employed him.  
And, sheriff, I will **engage** my word to thee  
That I will, by tomorrow **dinnertime**,  
Send him to **answer thee**, or any man,  
For anything he shall be charged **withal**:  
And so let me entreat you leave the house.

SHERIFF I will, my lord. There are two gentlemen  
Have in this robbery lost three hundred marks.

PRINCE HENRY It may be so: if he have robbed these men,  
He shall be **answerable**, and so farewell.

SHERIFF Goodnight, my noble lord.

PRINCE HENRY I think it is good **morrow**, is it not?

SHERIFF Indeed, my lord, I think it be two o'clock.

*Exeunt [Sheriff and Carrier]*

PRINCE HENRY This **oily** rascal is known as well as **Paul's**. Go,  
call him forth.

*To Peto*

PETO Falstaff! Fast asleep behind the arras, and snorting like a horse.

PRINCE HENRY Hark, how hard he fetches breath. Search his pockets.

*He searcheth his pockets, and findeth certain papers*  
What hast thou found?

PETO Nothing but papers, my lord.

PRINCE HENRY Let's see, what be they? Read them.

PETO '*Item*, A capon, 2s 2d. *Item*, Sauce, 4d.

*Reads*

*Item*, Sack, two gallons, 5s 8d. *Item*, Anchovies and sack after supper, 2s 6d. *Item*, Bread, ob.'

PRINCE HENRY O, monstrous! But one halfpenny-worth of bread

to this intolerable deal of sack? What there is else, keep close,

we'll read it at more advantage. There let him sleep till day.

I'll to the court in the morning. We must all to the wars, and

thy place shall be honourable. I'll procure this fat rogue a charge of foot, and I know his death will be a march of twelvescore. The money shall be paid back again with advantage. Be with me betimes in the morning, and so, good

morrow, Peto.

PETO Good morrow, good my lord.

*Exeunt*

## Act 3 Scene 1

*running scene 8*

---

**Location:** *unspecified; probably in Glendower's house*

*Enter Hotspur, Worcester, Lord Mortimer and Owen Glendower*

MORTIMER These **promises** are fair, the parties **sure**,  
And our **induction** full of **prosperous hope**.

HOTSPUR Lord Mortimer, and cousin Glendower,  
Will you sit down?  
And uncle Worcester — a plague upon it,  
I have forgot the map!

GLENDOWER No, here it is.

*Shows a map*

Sit, cousin Percy, sit, good cousin Hotspur —  
For by that name as oft as **Lancaster**  
Doth speak of you, his cheeks look pale and with  
A rising sigh he wisheth you in heaven.

HOTSPUR And you in hell, as oft as he hears Owen Glendower  
spoke of.

GLENDOWER I cannot blame him: at my nativity  
The **front** of heaven was full of fiery shapes,



Of burning **cressets**, and at my birth  
The frame and foundation of the earth  
Shaked like a coward.

HOTSPUR Why, so it would have done at the same season, if  
your mother's cat had but kittened, though yourself had  
never been born.

GLENDOWER I say the earth did shake when I was born.

HOTSPUR And I say the earth was not of my mind,  
If you suppose **as fearing you** it shook.

GLENDOWER The heavens were all on fire, the earth did  
tremble.

HOTSPUR O, then the earth shook to see the heavens on fire,  
And not in fear of your nativity.  
Diseasèd nature oftentimes breaks forth  
In strange **eruptions**; and the **teeming** earth  
Is with a kind of **colic** pinched and vexed  
By the imprisoning of unruly wind  
Within her **womb**, which, for **enlargement** striving,  
Shakes the old **beldam** earth and tumbles down  
Steeple and **moss-grown** towers. At your birth  
Our **grandam** earth, having this **distemperature**,  
In **passion** shook.

GLENDOWER Cousin, of many men  
I do not bear these **crossings**. Give me leave  
To tell you once again that at my birth  
The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,  
The goats ran from the mountains, and the herds  
Were strangely **clamorous** to the **frighted fields**.  
These signs have **marked me** extraordinary,  
And all the **courses** of my life do show

I am not in the **roll** of common men.  
Where is **the living, clipped in with** the sea  
That **chides** the banks of England, Scotland and Wales,  
Which calls me pupil, or hath **read to** me?  
And bring him out that is but woman's son  
Can **trace** me in the **tedious** ways of **art**  
And **hold me pace** in **deep experiments**.

HOTSPUR I think there's no man speaks better **Welsh**.  
I'll to dinner.

MORTIMER Peace, cousin Percy, you will make him mad.

GLENDOWER I can **call** spirits from the **vasty deep**.

HOTSPUR Why, so can I, or so can any man.  
But will they come when you do call for them?

GLENDOWER Why, I can teach thee, cousin, to command the  
devil.

HOTSPUR And I can teach thee, cousin, to shame the devil  
By telling truth: **tell truth and shame the devil**.  
If thou have power to raise him, bring him hither,  
And I'll be sworn I have power to shame him hence.  
O, while you live, tell truth and shame the devil!

MORTIMER Come, come, no more of this unprofitable chat.

GLENDOWER Three times hath Henry Bullingbrook **made head**  
Against my **power**: thrice from the banks of **Wye**  
And sandy-bottomed Severn have I sent him  
**Bootless** home and weather-beaten back.

HOTSPUR Home without boots, and in foul weather too!  
How scapes he **agues**, in the devil's name?

GLENDOWER Come, here's the map: shall we divide our **right**  
According to our **threefold order ta'en**?

MORTIMER The archdeacon hath divided it  
Into three limits very equally:  
England, from Trent and Severn hitherto,  
By south and east is to my part assigned:  
All westward, Wales beyond the Severn shore,  
And all the fertile land within that bound,  
To Owen Glendower: and, dear coz, to you  
The remnant northward, lying off from Trent.  
And our indentures tripartite are drawn,  
Which being sealed interchangeably —  
A business that this night may execute—  
Tomorrow, cousin Percy, you and I  
And my good lord of Worcester will set forth  
To meet your father and the Scottish power,  
As is appointed us, at Shrewsbury.  
My father Glendower is not ready yet,  
Nor shall we need his help these fourteen days.—  
Within that space you may have drawn together

*To Glendower*

Your tenants, friends and neighbouring gentlemen.

GLENDOWER A shorter time shall send me to you, lords.  
And in my conduct shall your ladies come,  
From whom you now must steal and take no leave,  
For there will be a world of water shed  
Upon the parting of your wives and you.

HOTSPUR Methinks my moiety, north from  
Burton here,

*Looks at map*

In quantity equals not one of yours:  
See how this river comes me cranking in,  
And cuts me from the best of all my land  
A huge half-moon, a monstrous cantle out.  
I'll have the current in this place dammed up,  
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run  
In a new channel, fair and evenly.  
It shall not wind with such a deep indent,  
To rob me of so rich a bottom here.

GLENDOWER Not wind? It shall, it must. You see it doth.

MORTIMER Yea, but  
Mark how he bears his course, and runs me up  
With like advantage on the other side,  
Gelding the opposèd continent as much  
As on the other side it takes from you.

WORCESTER Yea, but a little charge will trench him here  
And on this north side win this cape of land,  
And then he runs straight and even.

HOTSPUR I'll have it so. A little charge will do it.

GLENDOWER I'll not have it altered.

HOTSPUR Will not you?

GLENDOWER No, nor you shall not.

HOTSPUR Who shall say me nay?

GLENDOWER Why, that will I.

HOTSPUR Let me not understand you, then. Speak it in Welsh.

GLENDOWER I can speak English, lord, as well as you,  
For I was trained up in the English court;  
Where, being but young, I framed to the harp  
Many an English ditty lovely well

And gave the tongue a helpful ornament;  
A virtue that was never seen in you.

HOTSPUR Marry,  
And I am glad of it with all my heart.  
I had rather be a kitten and cry mew  
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.  
I had rather hear a brazen candlestick turned,  
Or a dry wheel grate on the axle-tree,  
And that would set my teeth nothing on edge,  
Nothing so much as mincing poetry:  
'Tis like the forced gait of a shuffling nag.

GLENDOWER Come, you shall have Trent turned.

HOTSPUR I do not care: I'll give thrice so much land  
To any well-deserving friend;  
But in the way of bargain, mark ye me,  
I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair.  
Are the indentures drawn? Shall we be gone?

GLENDOWER The moon shines fair, you may away by night.  
I'll haste the writer and withal  
Break with your wives of your departure hence.  
I am afraid my daughter will run mad,  
So much she doteth on her Mortimer.

*Exit*

MORTIMER Fie, cousin Percy, how you cross my father!

HOTSPUR I cannot choose: sometime he angers me  
With telling me of the mouldwarp and the ant,  
Of the dreamer Merlin and his prophecies,  
And of a dragon and a finless fish,

A clip-winged griffin and a moulten raven,  
A couching lion and a ramping cat,  
And such a deal of skimble-skamble stuff  
As puts me from my faith. I tell you what,  
He held me last night at least nine hours  
In reck'ning up the several devils' names  
That were his lackeys: I cried 'Hum', and 'Well, go to',  
But marked him not a word. O, he is as tedious  
As a tired horse, a railing wife,  
Worse than a smoky house. I had rather live  
With cheese and garlic in a windmill far,  
Than feed on cates and have him talk to me  
In any summer-house in Christendom.

MORTIMER In faith, he was a worthy gentleman,  
Exceeding well read, and profited  
In strange concealments, valiant as a lion  
And wondrous affable and as bountiful  
As mines of India. Shall I tell you, cousin?  
He holds your temper in a high respect  
And curbs himself even of his natural scope  
When you do cross his humour — 'faith, he does.  
I warrant you, that man is not alive  
Might so have tempted him as you have done,  
Without the taste of danger and reproof:  
But do not use it oft, let me entreat you.

WORCESTER In faith, my lord, you are too wilful-blame,

*To Hotspur*

And since your coming hither have done enough  
To put him quite besides his patience.  
You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault:

Though sometimes it **show** greatness, courage, **blood** —  
And that's the **dearest grace** it **renders** you —  
Yet oftentimes it doth **present** harsh rage,  
Defect of manners, **want of government**,  
Pride, haughtiness, **opinion** and disdain,  
The least of which **haunting** a nobleman  
**Loseth** men's hearts and leaves behind a stain  
Upon the beauty of all **parts besides**,  
**Beguiling** them of commendation.

HOTSPUR Well, I am **schooled**. Good manners **be your speed**!  
Here come our wives, and let us take our leave.

*Enter Glendower with the Ladies*

MORTIMER This is the deadly **spite** that angers me:  
My wife can speak no English, I no Welsh.

GLENDOWER My daughter weeps. She'll not part with you,  
She'll be a soldier too, she'll to the wars.

MORTIMER Good father, tell her that she and my **aunt Percy**  
Shall follow **in your conduct** speedily.

*Glendower speaks to her in Welsh, and she answers him in the same*

GLENDOWER She is **desperate here**: a **peevish self-willed harlotry**,  
One that no persuasion can do good upon.

*The Lady speaks in Welsh*

MORTIMER I understand thy looks: that pretty Welsh  
Which thou pour'st down from these swelling heavens  
I am too perfect in, and, but for shame,  
In such a parley should I answer thee.

*The Lady [speaks] again in Welsh*

I understand thy kisses and thou mine,  
And that's a feeling disputation.  
But I will never be a truant, love,  
Till I have learned thy language, for thy tongue  
Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penned,  
Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bow'r,  
With ravishing division, to her lute.

GLENDOWER Nay, if thou melt, then will she run mad.

*The Lady speaks again in Welsh*

MORTIMER O, I am ignorance itself in this!

GLENDOWER She bids you on the wanton rushes lay you down  
And rest your gentle head upon her lap,  
And she will sing the song that pleaseth you  
And on your eyelids crown the god of sleep,  
Charming your blood with pleasing heaviness,  
Making such difference 'twixt wake and sleep  
As is the difference betwixt day and night  
The hour before the heavenly-harnessed team  
Begins his golden progress in the east.

MORTIMER With all my heart I'll sit and hear her sing:  
By that time will our book, I think, be drawn.



GLENDOWER Do so,  
And those musicians that shall play to you  
Hang in the air a thousand leagues from hence,  
And straight they shall be here: sit, and attend.

HOTSPUR Come, Kate, thou art perfect in lying down: come,  
quick, quick, that I may lay my head in thy lap.

LADY PERCY Go, ye giddy goose.

*The music plays*

HOTSPUR Now I perceive the devil understands Welsh, and  
'tis  
no marvel he is so humorous. By'r lady, he's a good  
musician.

LADY PERCY Then would you be nothing but musical, for you  
are  
altogether governed by humours. Lie still, ye thief, and  
hear  
the lady sing in Welsh.

HOTSPUR I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish.

LADY PERCY Wouldst have thy head broken?

HOTSPUR No.

LADY PERCY Then be still.

HOTSPUR Neither, 'tis a woman's fault.

LADY PERCY Now God help thee!

HOTSPUR To the Welsh lady's bed.

LADY PERCY What's that?

HOTSPUR Peace, she sings.

*Here the Lady sings a Welsh song*

HOTSPUR Come, I'll have your song too.

*To Lady Percy*

LADY PERCY Not mine, in good sooth.

HOTSPUR Not yours, in good sooth?

You swear like a comfit-maker's wife.

'Not you, in good sooth', and 'As true as I live',  
And 'As God shall mend me' and 'As sure as day!'

And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths,  
As if thou never walk'st further than Finsbury.

Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,  
A good mouth-filling oath, and leave 'in sooth',  
And such protest of pepper-gingerbread,  
To velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens.  
Come, sing.

LADY PERCY I will not sing.

HOTSPUR 'Tis the next way to turn tailor, or be red-breast  
teacher. An the indentures be drawn, I'll away within  
these  
two hours, and so, come in when ye will.

*Exit*

GLENDOWER Come, come, Lord Mortimer, you are as slow  
As hot Lord Percy is on fire to go.  
By this our book is drawn, we'll but seal,  
And then to horse immediately.

MORTIMER With all my heart.

*Exeunt*

## Act 3 Scene 2

*running scene 9*

---

**Location:** *the royal court.*

*Enter the King, Prince of Wales and others*

KING HENRY IV    Lords, **give us leave**. The Prince of Wales and I  
Must have some private conference. But be near at hand,  
For we shall presently have need of you.

*Exeunt Lords*

I know not whether heaven will have it so,  
For some displeasing service I have done,  
That in his secret **doom**, out of my **blood**  
He'll breed revengement and a **scourge** for me.  
But thou dost in thy **passages** of life  
Make me believe that thou art **only marked**  
**For** the hot vengeance and the **rod** of heaven  
To punish my **mistreadings**. Tell me **else**,  
Could such **inordinate** and low desires,  
Such poor, such **bare**, such **lewd**, such mean **attempts**,  
Such barren pleasures, **rude society**,  
As thou art matched **withal** and **grafted** to,  
Accompany the greatness of thy blood  
And **hold their level** with thy princely heart?

PRINCE HENRY    So please your majesty, I would I could  
Quit all offences with as clear excuse  
As well as I am doubtless I can purge  
Myself of many I am charged withal:  
Yet such extenuation let me beg,  
As, in reproof of many tales devised,  
Which oft the ear of greatness needs must hear  
By smiling pick-thanks and base news-mongers,  
I may, for some things true, wherein my youth  
Hath faulty wand'ered and irregular,  
Find pardon on my true submission.

KING HENRY IV    Heaven pardon thee! Yet let me wonder, Harry,  
At thy affections, which do hold a wing  
Quite from the flight of all thy ancestors.  
Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,  
Which by thy younger brother is supplied,  
And art almost an alien to the hearts  
Of all the court and princes of my blood.  
The hope and expectation of thy time  
Is ruined, and the soul of every man  
Prophetically do forethink thy fall.  
Had I so lavish of my presence been,  
So common-hackneyed in the eyes of men,  
So stale and cheap to vulgar company,  
Opinion, that did help me to the crown,  
Had still kept loyal to possession  
And left me in reputeless banishment,  
A fellow of no mark nor likelihood.  
By being seldom seen, I could not stir  
But like a comet I was wondered at,  
That men would tell their children, 'This is he'.

Others would say, 'Where? Which is Bullingbrook?'  
And then I **stole all courtesy from heaven**,  
And dressed myself in such humility  
That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,  
Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,  
Even in the presence of the crownèd king.  
Thus I did keep my person fresh and new;  
My presence, like a robe **pontifical**,  
Ne'er seen but wondered at: and so my **state**,  
**Seldom** but sumptuous, showed like a **feast**  
And won by rareness such **solemnity**.  
The **skipping** king, he ambled **up and down**  
With shallow jesters and **rash bavin** wits,  
Soon kindled and soon burnt, **carded his state**,  
Mingled his royalty with **carping** fools,  
Had his great name profanèd with their **scorns**  
And gave his countenance, **against his name**,  
To laugh at **gibing** boys and **stand the push**  
Of every **beardless vain comparative**;  
Grew a companion to the common streets,  
**Enfeoffed** himself to popularity,  
That, being daily swallowed by men's eyes,  
They **surfeited** with honey and began  
To **loathe the taste of sweetness**, whereof a little  
More than a little is by much too much.  
So when he had occasion to be seen,  
He was but as the **cuckoo is in June**,  
Heard, not regarded, seen, but with such eyes  
As, sick and blunted with **community**,  
Afford no **extraordinary gaze**,  
Such as is bent on sun-like majesty  
When it shines seldom in admiring eyes.

But rather drowsed and hung their eyelids down,  
Slept in his face and rendered such aspect  
As cloudy men use to do to their adversaries,  
Being with his presence glutted, gorged and full.  
And in that very line, Harry, standest thou,  
For thou hast lost thy princely privilege  
With vile participation. Not an eye  
But is a-weary of thy common sight,  
Save mine, which hath desired to see thee more,  
Which now doth that I would not have it do,  
Make blind itself with foolish tenderness.

PRINCE HENRY I shall hereafter, my thrice-gracious lord,  
Be more myself.

KING HENRY IV For all the world

As thou art to this hour was Richard then,  
When I from France set foot at Ravenspurgh,  
And even as I was then is Percy now.  
Now, by my sceptre and my soul to boot,  
He hath more worthy interest to the state  
Than thou, the shadow of succession;  
For of no right, nor colour like to right,  
He doth fill fields with harness in the realm,  
Turns head against the lion's armed jaws,  
And, being no more in debt to years than thou,  
Leads ancient lords and reverend bishops on  
To bloody battles and to bruising arms.  
What never-dying honour hath he got  
Against renownèd Douglas, whose high deeds,  
Whose hot incursions and great name in arms  
Holds from all soldiers chief majority  
And military title capital

Through all the kingdoms that acknowledge Christ!  
Thrice hath the Hotspur, Mars in swaddling clothes,  
This infant warrior, in his enterprises  
Discomfited great Douglas, ta'en him once,  
Enlargèd him and made a friend of him,  
To fill the mouth of deep defiance up  
And shake the peace and safety of our throne.  
And what say you to this? Percy, Northumberland,  
The archbishop's grace of York, Douglas, Mortimer,  
Capitulate against us and are up.  
But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?  
Why, Harry, do I tell thee of my foes,  
Which art my near'st and dearest enemy?  
Thou that art like enough, through vassal fear,  
Base inclination and the start of spleen,  
To fight against me under Percy's pay,  
To dog his heels and curtsy at his frowns,  
To show how much thou art degenerate.

PRINCE HENRY    Do not think so. You shall not find it so.  
And heaven forgive them that so much have swayed  
Your majesty's good thoughts away from me!  
I will redeem all this on Percy's head  
And in the closing of some glorious day  
Be bold to tell you that I am your son,  
When I will wear a garment all of blood  
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,  
Which, washed away, shall scour my shame with it.  
And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,  
That this same child of honour and renown,  
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praisèd knight,  
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.



For every honour sitting on his **helm**,  
Would they were multitudes, and on my head  
My shames redoubled! For the time will come,  
That I shall make this northern youth exchange  
His glorious deeds for my indignities.  
Percy is but my **factor**, good my lord,  
To **engross up** glorious deeds on my behalf,  
And I will call him to so strict account,  
That he shall render every glory up,  
Yea, even the slightest **worship of his time**,  
Or I will tear the **reckoning** from his heart.  
This, in the name of heaven, I promise here:  
The which if I perform and do survive  
I do beseech your majesty may **salve**  
The long-grown wounds of my **intemperature**.  
If not, the end of life cancels all bonds,  
And I will die a hundred thousand deaths  
Ere break the smallest **parcel** of this vow.

KING HENRY IV    A hundred thousand rebels die in this:  
Thou shalt have **charge** and **sovereign** trust herein.

*Enter Blunt*

How now, good Blunt? Thy looks are full of **speed**.

BLUNT    So hath the business that I come to speak of.  
Lord Mortimer of Scotland hath sent word  
That Douglas and the English rebels met  
The eleventh of this month at Shrewsbury.  
A mighty and a fearful **head** they are,  
**If promises be kept on every hand**,  
As ever offered foul play in a state.

KING HENRY IV    The Earl of Westmorland set forth today,  
With him my son, Lord John of Lancaster,  
For this **advertisement** is five days old.  
On Wednesday next, Harry, thou shalt set forward:  
On Thursday we ourselves will march.  
Our meeting is **Bridgnorth**, and, Harry, you shall march  
Through Gloucestershire, by which account,  
**Our business valuèd**, some twelve days hence  
Our general forces at Bridgnorth shall meet.  
Our hands are full of business: let's away.  
**Advantage feeds him fat** while men delay.

*Exeunt*

## Act 3 Scene 3

*running scene 10*

---

*Location: the tavern in Eastcheap*

*Enter Falstaff and Bardolph*

FALSTAFF    Bardolph, am I not **fallen away vilely** since this last  
**action**? Do I not **bate**? Do I not dwindle? Why my skin  
hangs  
about me like an old lady's loose gown. I am withered like  
an  
old **apple-john**. Well, I'll repent, and that **suddenly**, while  
I  
am **in some liking**. I shall be **out of heart** shortly, and then

I

shall have no **strength** to repent. An I have not forgotten what the inside of a church is made of, I am a **peppercorn**, a **brewer's horse**. The inside of a church! Company, villainous company, hath been the spoil of me.

BARDOLPH Sir John, you are so **fretful**, you cannot live long.

FALSTAFF Why, **there is it**: come sing me a bawdy song, make me merry. I was as virtuously **given** as a gentleman need to

be; virtuous enough: swore little, diced not — above seven

times a week, went to a **bawdy-house** not above once in a quarter — of an hour, paid money that I borrowed — three

of four times, lived well and in good **compass**: and now I live

out of all order, out of compass.

BARDOLPH Why, you are so fat, Sir John, that you must needs be

out of all compass, out of all reasonable compass, Sir John.

FALSTAFF Do thou amend thy face, and I'll amend my life: thou art our **admiral**, thou bearest the lantern in the **poop**, but 'tis in the **nose** of thee; thou art the **Knight of the Burning Lamp**.

BARDOLPH Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm.

FALSTAFF No, I'll be sworn, I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a **death's-head** or a **memento mori**: I never see thy

face but I think upon hellfire and *Dives that lived in purple*, for

there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; my oath should be 'By this fire', but thou art altogether *given over*; and

wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness. When thou ran'st up Gad's Hill in the night to catch my horse, if I did not think that thou hadst been an *ignis fatuus* or a *ball of wildfire*, there's no *purchase* in money.

O, thou art a perpetual triumph, an everlasting *bonfire-light*!

Thou hast saved me a thousand marks in *links* and torches,

walking with thee in the night betwixt tavern and tavern. But

the sack that thou hast *drunk me* would have bought me lights as *good cheap* as the dearest *chandler's* in Europe. I have maintained that *salamander* of yours with fire any time

this two and thirty years. Heaven reward me for it!

BARDOLPH *I would my face were in your belly!*

FALSTAFF So should I be sure to *be heart-burned*.

*Enter Hostess [Quickly]*

How now, *Dame Partlet* the hen! Have you inquired yet who  
picked my pocket?

HOSTESS QUICKLY Why, Sir John, what do you think, Sir John?  
Do you think I keep thieves in my house? I have searched,  
I  
have inquired, so has my husband, man by man, boy by  
boy,  
servant by servant. The **tithe** of a hair was never lost in  
my  
house before.

FALSTAFF Ye lie, hostess: Bardolph **was shaved** and lost many  
a hair; and I'll be sworn my pocket was picked. Go to, you  
are  
a **woman**, go.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Who, I? I defy thee. I was never called so in  
mine own house before.

FALSTAFF Go to, I **know** you well enough.

HOSTESS QUICKLY No, Sir John, you do not know me, Sir John. I  
know you, Sir John: you owe me money, Sir John, and  
now  
you pick a quarrel to **beguile** me of it. I bought you a  
dozen  
of shirts **to your back**.

FALSTAFF **Dowlas**, filthy dowlas: I have given them away to  
bakers' wives, and they have made **bolters** of them.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Now, as I am a true woman, **holland** of eight  
shillings an **ell**. You owe money here besides, Sir John, for  
your **diet and by-drinkings**, and money lent you, four and  
twenty pounds.

FALSTAFF He had his part of it, let him pay.

*Points to Bardolph*

HOSTESS QUICKLY He? Alas, he is poor, he hath nothing.

FALSTAFF How? Poor? Look upon his face. What call you rich?

Let them coin his nose, let them coin his cheeks. I'll not pay

a **denier**. What, will you make a **younker** of me? Shall I not

**take mine ease** in mine inn but I shall have my pocket picked?

I have lost a **seal-ring** of my grandfather's worth **forty mark**.

HOSTESS QUICKLY I have heard the prince tell him, I know not how oft, that that ring was copper!

FALSTAFF How? The prince is a **jack**, a **sneak-cup**. An if he were here, I would cudgel him like a dog, if he would say so.

*Enter the Prince marching [with Peto], and Falstaff meets him playing on his **trunccheon** like a fife*

How now, lad? **Is the wind in that door?** Must we all march?

BARDOLPH Yea, **two and two, Newgate fashion**.

HOSTESS QUICKLY My lord, I pray you hear me.

PRINCE HENRY What say'st thou, Mistress Quickly? How does thy husband? I love him well. He is an honest man.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Good my lord, hear me.

FALSTAFF Prithee let her alone, and list to me.

PRINCE HENRY What say'st thou, Jack?

FALSTAFF The other night I fell asleep here behind the arras and had my pocket picked. This house is turned bawdy-house: they **pick pockets**.

PRINCE HENRY What didst thou lose, Jack?

FALSTAFF Wilt thou believe me, Hal, three or four **bonds** of forty pound apiece, and a seal-ring of my grandfather's?

PRINCE HENRY A trifle, some eight-penny matter.

HOSTESS QUICKLY So I told him, my lord; and I said I heard your

grace say so. And, my lord, he speaks most vilely of you, like

a foul-mouthed man as he is, and said he would cudgel you.

PRINCE HENRY What? He did not?

HOSTESS QUICKLY There's neither faith, truth, nor womanhood in me else.

FALSTAFF There's no more faith in thee than a **stewed prune**, nor no more truth in thee than in a **drawn fox**. And for womanhood, **Maid Marian** may be the **deputy's wife of the ward** to thee. Go, you **nothing**, go.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Say, what **thing**? What thing?

FALSTAFF What thing? Why, a thing to thank heaven **on**.

HOSTESS QUICKLY I am no thing to thank heaven on, I would thou shouldst know it. I am an honest man's wife, and, setting **thy knighthood** aside, thou art a knave to call me so.

FALSTAFF Setting thy womanhood aside, thou art a beast to say otherwise.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Say, what beast, thou knave, thou?

FALSTAFF What beast? Why, an [otter](#).

PRINCE HENRY An otter, Sir John? Why an otter?

FALSTAFF Why? She's neither fish nor flesh; a man knows not where to [have](#) her.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Thou art an unjust man in saying so; thou or any man knows where to have me, thou knave, thou!

PRINCE HENRY Thou say'st true, hostess, and he slanders thee most grossly.

HOSTESS QUICKLY So he doth you, my lord, and said this other day you owed him a thousand pound.

PRINCE HENRY Sirrah, do I owe you a thousand pound?

FALSTAFF A thousand pound, Hal? A million. Thy love is worth a million: thou ow'st me thy love.

HOSTESS QUICKLY Nay, my lord, he called you Jack, and said he would cudgel you.

FALSTAFF Did I, Bardolph?

BARDOLPH Indeed, Sir John, you said so.

FALSTAFF Yea, if he said my ring was copper.

PRINCE HENRY I say 'tis copper. Dar'st thou be as good as thy word now?

FALSTAFF Why, Hal, thou know'st, as thou art but a man, I dare, but as thou art a prince, I fear thee as I fear the roaring of the lion's [whelp](#).

PRINCE HENRY And why not as the lion?

FALSTAFF The king himself is to be feared as the lion: dost thou think I'll fear thee as I fear thy father? Nay, if I do,



let my  
girdle break.

PRINCE HENRY O, if it should, how would thy guts fall about thy knees! But, sirrah, there's no room for faith, truth, nor honesty in this bosom of thine: it is all filled up with guts and

midriff. Charge an honest woman with picking thy pocket?

Why, thou whoreson, impudent, embossed rascal, if there were anything in thy pocket but tavern-reck'nings, memorandums of bawdy-houses, and one poor penny-worth of sugar-candy to make thee long-winded: if thy pocket were enriched with any other injuries but these, I am

a villain. And yet you will stand to it, you will not pocket up wrong. Art thou not ashamed?

FALSTAFF Dost thou hear, Hal? Thou know'st in the state of innocence Adam fell, and what should poor Jack Falstaff do

in the days of villainy? Thou seest I have more flesh than another man, and therefore more frailty. You confess then, you picked my pocket?

PRINCE HENRY It appears so by the story.

FALSTAFF Hostess, I forgive thee. Go, make ready breakfast, love thy husband, look to thy servants and cherish thy guests.

Thou shalt find me tractable to any honest reason: thou

seest

I am pacified **still**. Nay, prithee be gone.—

*Exit Hostess*

Now Hal, to the news at court: for the robbery, lad, how is that **answered**?

PRINCE HENRY O, my **sweet beef**, I must still be **good angel** to thee. The money is paid back again.

FALSTAFF O, I do not like that paying back, 'tis a **double labour**.

PRINCE HENRY I am good friends with my father and may do anything.

FALSTAFF Rob me the **exchequer** the first thing thou dost, and do it **with unwashed hands** too.

BARDOLPH Do, my lord.

PRINCE HENRY I have procured thee, Jack, a **charge of foot**.

FALSTAFF I would it had been of horse. Where shall I find one that can steal well? O, for a fine thief, of two-and-twenty or

thereabout! I am heinously **unprovided**. Well, God be thanked for these rebels, **they offend none but the virtuous**. I

**laud** them, I praise them.

PRINCE HENRY Bardolph.

BARDOLPH My lord?

PRINCE HENRY Go bear this letter to Lord John of Lancaster,

*Gives letters*

To my brother John. This to my lord of Westmorland.—

*[Exit Bardolph]*

Go, Peto, to horse, for thou and I  
Have thirty miles to ride yet ere dinner time.—

*[Exit Peto]*

Jack, meet me tomorrow in the **Temple hall**  
At two o'clock in the afternoon.  
There shalt thou know thy **charge** and there receive  
Money and order for their **furniture**.  
The land is burning, Percy stands on high,  
And either they or we must lower lie.

*[Exit Prince Henry]*

FALSTAFF **Rare** words! **Brave** world! Hostess, my breakfast,  
come!  
O, I could wish this **tavern were my drum!**

*Exit*

## Act 4 Scene 1

***running scene 11***

---

***Location:** the rebel camp near Shrewsbury*

*Enter Harry Hotspur, Worcester and Douglas*

HOTSPUR Well said, my noble Scot. If speaking truth  
In this **fine** age were not thought flattery,  
Such **attribution** should **the Douglas** have,  
**As not a** soldier of this **season's stamp**  
Should go so **general current** through the world.  
By heaven, I cannot flatter: I **defy**  
The tongues of **soothers**. But a **braver** place  
In my heart's love hath no man than yourself.  
Nay, **task** me to my word, **approve me**, lord.

DOUGLAS Thou art the king of honour:  
No man so potent **breathes upon the ground**  
But I will **beard** him.

*Enter a Messenger*

*With letters*

HOTSPUR Do so, and 'tis well.—

What letters hast there? — I can **but** thank you.

MESSANGER These letters come from your father.

HOTSPUR Letters from him? Why comes he not himself?

MESSANGER He cannot come, my lord, he is grievous sick.

HOTSPUR How? Has he the leisure to be sick now

In such a **jostling** time? Who leads his **power**?

Under whose **government** come they along?

MESSANGER His letters **bears** his mind, not **I his mind**.

WORCESTER I prithee tell me, doth he **keep** his bed?

MESSENGER He did, my lord, four days ere I set forth,  
And at the time of my departure thence  
He was much feared by his physician.

WORCESTER I would the state of time had first been whole  
Ere he by sickness had been visited:  
His health was never better worth than now.

HOTSPUR Sick now? Droop now? This sickness doth infect  
The very life-blood of our enterprise,  
'Tis catching hither, even to our camp.  
He writes me here that inward sickness —  
And that his friends by deputation could not  
So soon be drawn, nor did he think it meet  
To lay so dangerous and dear a trust  
On any soul removed but on his own.  
Yet doth he give us bold advertisement,  
That with our small conjunction we should on,  
To see how fortune is disposed to us,  
For, as he writes, there is no quailing now,  
Because the king is certainly possessed  
Of all our purposes. What say you to it?

WORCESTER Your father's sickness is a maim to us.

HOTSPUR A perilous gash, a very limb lopped off:  
And yet, in faith, it is not. His present want  
Seems more than we shall find it. Were it good  
To set the exact wealth of all our states  
All at one cast? To set so rich a main  
On the nice hazard of one doubtful hour?  
It were not good, for therein should we read  
The very bottom and the soul of hope,  
The very list, the very utmost bound  
Of all our fortunes.

DOUGLAS 'Faith, and so we should,  
Where now remains a sweet **reversion**,  
We may boldly spend upon the hope of what  
Is to come in.  
A comfort of **retirement** lives in this.

HOTSPUR A **rendezvous**, a home to fly unto,  
If that the devil and mischance look **big**  
Upon the **maidenhead** of our affairs.

WORCESTER But yet I would your father had been here.  
The quality and **hair** of our attempt  
**Brooks** no division: it will be thought  
By some, that know not why he is away,  
That wisdom, **loyalty** and **mere** dislike  
Of our proceedings kept the earl from hence.  
And think how such an **apprehension**  
May turn the tide of **fearful faction**  
And breed a kind of **question** in our cause,  
For well you know, we of the **off'ring** side  
Must keep aloof from **strict arbitrement**,  
And stop all sight-holes, every **loop** from whence  
The eye of reason may pry in upon us:  
This absence of your father **draws** a curtain,  
That shows the ignorant a kind of fear  
Before not dreamt of.

HOTSPUR You **strain too far**.  
I rather of his absence **make this use**:  
It lends a lustre and more great **opinion**,  
A larger **dare** to our great enterprise,  
Than if the earl were here, for men must think,  
If we without his help can **make a head**  
To push against the kingdom, with his help

We shall o'erturn it topsy-turvy down.

Yet all goes well, yet all our joints are whole.

DOUGLAS As heart can think. There is not such a word  
Spoke of in Scotland as this dream of fear.

*Enter Sir Richard Vernon*

HOTSPUR My cousin Vernon, welcome, by my soul.

VERNON Pray God my news be worth a welcome, lord.  
The Earl of Westmorland, seven thousand strong,  
Is marching hitherwards, with him Prince John.

HOTSPUR No harm: what more?

VERNON And further, I have learned,  
The king himself in person hath set forth,  
Or hitherwards intended speedily,  
With strong and mighty preparation.

HOTSPUR He shall be welcome too. Where is his son,  
The nimble-footed madcap Prince of Wales,  
And his comrades that daffed the world aside  
And bid it pass?

VERNON All furnished, all in arms,  
All plumed like estridges that with the wind  
Bated like eagles having lately bathed,  
Glittering in golden coats like images,  
As full of spirit as the month of May,  
And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer,  
Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.  
I saw young Harry with his beaver on,  
His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly armed,  
Rise from the ground like feathered Mercury,

And vaulted with such ease into his [seat](#),  
As if an angel dropped down from the clouds,  
To turn and [wind](#) a fiery [Pegasus](#)  
And [witch](#) the world with noble horsemanship.

HOTSPUR No more, no more. Worse than the sun in March,  
This praise doth nourish [agues](#). Let them come.  
They come like sacrifices in their [trim](#),  
And to the fire-eyed [maid of smoky war](#)  
All hot and bleeding will we offer them:  
The [mailed Mars](#) shall on his altar sit  
Up to the ears in blood. I am on fire  
To hear this rich [reprisal](#) is so nigh  
And yet not ours. Come, let me take my horse,  
Who is to bear me like a thunderbolt  
Against the bosom of the Prince of Wales.  
Harry to Harry, shall hot horse to horse  
Meet and ne'er part till one drop down a corpse!  
O, that Glendower were come!

VERNON There is more news:  
I learned in [Worcester](#), as I rode along,  
He cannot [draw his power this fourteen days](#).

DOUGLAS That's the worst tidings that I hear of yet.

WORCESTER Ay, by my faith, that bears a frosty sound.

HOTSPUR [What may the king's whole battle reach unto?](#)

VERNON To thirty thousand.

HOTSPUR Forty let it be.  
My father and Glendower being both away,  
The [powers of us](#) may [serve](#) so great a day.  
Come, let us take a [muster](#) speedily:  
[Doomsday](#) is near; die all, die merrily.



DOUGLAS    Talk not of dying. I am **out of** fear  
              Of death or death's hand for **this one-half year**.

*Exeunt*

## Act 4 Scene 2

*running scene 12*

---

**Location:** *the road (they are traveling, probably along the Roman road Watling Street from London to Shrewsbury via Coventry, a Midlands town near Stratford-upon-Avon)*

*Enter Falstaff and Bardolph*

FALSTAFF    Bardolph, **get thee before** to Coventry. Fill me a bottle of sack. Our soldiers shall march through, we'll to **Sutton Coldfield** tonight.

BARDOLPH    Will you give me money, captain?

FALSTAFF    **Lay out**, lay out.

BARDOLPH    This bottle **makes** an **angel**.

FALSTAFF    An if it do, take it for thy labour. And if it make twenty, take them all, I'll **answer the coinage**. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at the town's end.

BARDOLPH    I will, captain. Farewell.

*Exit*

FALSTAFF If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the king's press damnably. I have got,

in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I press me none but good householders, yeoman's sons, inquire me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the banns, such a commodity of warm slaves as had as lieve hear the devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver worse than a struck fowl

or a hurt wild duck. I pressed me none but such toasts-and-butter,

with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads, and they have bought out their services. And now my

whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the

painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores; and

such as indeed were never soldiers, but discarded unjust servingmen, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters and ostlers trade-fallen, the cankers of a calm world

and long peace, ten times more dishonourable ragged than

an old-faced ancient; and such have I, to fill up the rooms of

them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals lately

come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks. A

mad fellow met me on the way and told me I had unloaded

all the **gibbets** and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen

such scarecrows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat. Nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had **gyves** on; for indeed, I had the most of

them out of prison. There's not a shirt and a half in all my company, and the half shirt is two napkins tacked together

and thrown over the shoulders like a **herald's coat without**

**sleeves**, and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host of

**Saint Albans**, or the red-nose innkeeper of **Daventry**. But that's all one, they'll **find linen enough on every hedge**.

*Enter the Prince and the Lord of Westmorland*

PRINCE HENRY    How now, **blown** Jack? How now, **quilt**?

FALSTAFF    What, Hal? How now, mad wag? What a devil dost thou in Warwickshire? — My good lord of Westmorland, I **cry you mercy**: I thought your honour had already been at Shrewsbury.

WESTMORLAND    'Faith, Sir John, 'tis more than time that I were there, and you too, but my powers are there already. The king, I can tell you, **looks for** us all: we must away all tonight.

FALSTAFF    Tut, never **fear** me. I am as vigilant as a cat to steal cream.

PRINCE HENRY I think to steal cream indeed, for thy theft hath already made thee **butter**. But tell me, Jack, whose fellows are these that come after?

FALSTAFF Mine, Hal, mine.

PRINCE HENRY I did never see such pitiful rascals.

FALSTAFF Tut, tut, good enough to **toss: food for powder**, food for powder. They'll fill a **pit as well as better**. **Tush**, man, mortal men, mortal men.

WESTMORLAND Ay, but, Sir John, methinks they are exceeding poor and **bare**, too beggarly.

FALSTAFF Faith, for their poverty, I know not where they had that; and for their bareness, I am sure they never learned that of me.

PRINCE HENRY No, I'll be sworn, unless you call three fingers on the ribs bare. But, sirrah, make haste. Percy is already in the **field**.

FALSTAFF What, is the king encamped?

WESTMORLAND He is, Sir John. I fear we shall **stay** too long.

FALSTAFF Well,  
**To the latter end of a fray and the beginning of a feast  
Fits a dull fighter and a keen guest.**

*Exeunt*

## Act 4 Scene 3

*running scene 13*

---

*Location: the rebel camp near Shrewsbury*

*Enter Hotspur, Worcester, Douglas and Vernon*

HOTSPUR We'll fight with **him** tonight.

WORCESTER It may not be.

DOUGLAS You give him **then** advantage.

VERNON Not a whit.

HOTSPUR Why say you so? **Looks he not for supply?**

VERNON So do we.

HOTSPUR His is certain, ours is doubtful.

WORCESTER Good cousin, be advised, stir not tonight.

VERNON Do not, my lord.

DOUGLAS You do not counsel well:

You speak it out of fear and cold heart.

VERNON Do me no slander, Douglas: by my life,  
And I dare well **maintain** it with my life,  
If **well-respected** honour **bid me on**,  
I hold as little **counsel** with weak fear  
As you, my lord, or any Scot that this day lives.  
Let it be seen tomorrow in the battle  
Which of us fears.

DOUGLAS Yea, or tonight.

VERNON Content.

HOTSPUR Tonight, say I.

VERNON Come, come it may not be. I wonder much,  
Being men of such great **leading** as you are,  
That you foresee not what impediments  
**Drag** back our **expedition**: certain **horse**  
Of my cousin Vernon's are not yet come up,  
Your uncle Worcester's horse came but today,  
And now their **pride and mettle** is asleep,  
Their courage with hard labour tame and dull,  
**That not a horse is half the half of himself.**

HOTSPUR So are the horses of the enemy  
In general, **journey-bated** and brought low.  
The better part of ours are full of rest.

WORCESTER The number of the king exceedeth ours:  
For God's sake, cousin, stay till all come in.

*The trumpet sounds a parley*

*Enter Sir Walter Blunt*

BLUNT I come with gracious offers from the king,  
If you **vouchsafe** me hearing and **respect**.

HOTSPUR Welcome, Sir Walter Blunt, and would to God  
You were of our **determination**.  
Some of us love you well, and **even those some**  
Envy your great deservings and good name,  
Because you are not of our **quality**,  
But stand against us like an enemy.

BLUNT And heaven **defend** but still I should stand so,  
So long as **out of limit** and true rule  
You stand against **anointed** majesty.

But to my **charge**: the king hath sent to know  
The nature of your **griefs**, and **whereupon**  
You **conjure** from the breast of civil peace  
Such bold hostility, teaching his duteous land  
Audacious cruelty. **If that** the king  
Have any way your good **deserts** forgot,  
Which he confesseth to be manifold,  
He bids you name your griefs, and with all speed  
You shall have your desires **with interest**,  
And pardon absolute for yourself and these  
Herein misled by your **suggestion**.

HOTSPUR The king is kind, and well we know the king  
Knows at what time to promise, when to pay.  
My father, my uncle and myself  
Did give him that same royalty he wears,  
And when he **was not six and twenty strong**,  
**Sick in the world's regard**, wretched and low,  
A poor **unminded outlaw** sneaking home,  
My father gave him welcome to the shore.  
And when he heard him swear and vow to God  
He came but to be Duke of Lancaster,  
To **sue his livery** and **beg his peace**,  
With tears of innocency and **terms of zeal**,  
My father, in kind heart and pity moved,  
Swore him assistance and performed it too.  
Now when the lords and barons of the realm  
Perceived Northumberland did lean to him,  
The **more and less came in with cap and knee**,  
Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,  
**Attended** him on bridges, stood in **lanes**,  
Laid gifts before him, proffered him their oaths,

Gave him their heirs, as pages followed him  
Even at the heels in golden multitudes.  
He presently, as greatness knows itself,  
Steps me a little higher than his vow  
Made to my father, while his blood was poor,  
Upon the naked shore at Ravenspurgh,  
And now, forsooth, takes on him to reform  
Some certain edicts and some strait decrees  
That lay too heavy on the commonwealth,  
Cries out upon abuses, seems to weep  
Over his country's wrongs, and by this face,  
This seeming brow of justice, did he win  
The hearts of all that he did angle for.  
Proceeded further — cut me off the heads  
Of all the favourites that the absent king  
In deputation left behind him here,  
When he was personal in the Irish war.

BLUNT Tut, I came not to hear this.

HOTSPUR Then to the point.

In short time after, he deposed the king.  
Soon after that, deprived him of his life,  
And in the neck of that, tasked the whole state.  
To make that worse, suffered his kinsman March —  
Who is, if every owner were placed,  
Indeed his king — to be engaged in Wales,  
There without ransom to lie forfeited,  
Disgraced me in my happy victories,  
Sought to entrap me by intelligence,  
Rated my uncle from the council board,  
In rage dismissed my father from the court,  
Broke oath on oath, committed wrong on wrong,



And in conclusion drove us to seek out  
This **head of safety**; and **withal** to **pry**  
**Into his title**, the which we find  
Too **indirect for long continuance**.

BLUNT Shall I return this answer to the king?

HOTSPUR Not so, Sir Walter. We'll withdraw awhile.  
Go to the king, and let there be **impawned**  
Some **surety** for a safe return again,  
And in the morning early shall my uncle  
Bring him our purpose. And so farewell.

BLUNT I would you would **accept of grace and love**

HOTSPUR And't may be so we shall.

BLUNT Pray heaven you do.

*Exeunt*

## Act 4 Scene 4

*running scene 14*

---

**Location:** *unspecified; presumably in the Archbishop of York's palace*

*Enter the Archbishop of York and Sir Michael*

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK **Hie**, good Sir Michael; bear  
this sealèd **brief**

With wingèd haste to the Lord Marshal,  
This to my cousin Scroop, and all the rest  
To whom they are **directed**. If you knew  
How **much they do import**, you would make haste.

SIR MICHAEL My good lord,  
I guess their **tenor**.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK **Like** enough you do.  
Tomorrow, good Sir Michael, is a day  
Wherein the fortune of ten thousand men  
Must **bide the touch**, for, sir, at Shrewsbury,  
As I am truly given to understand,  
The king with mighty and quick-raised power  
Meets with **Lord Harry**. And I fear, Sir Michael,  
What with the sickness of Northumberland,  
Whose **power was in the first proportion**,  
And what with Owen Glendower's absence thence,  
Who with them was **rated firmly** too  
And **comes not in, o'er-ruled by prophecies**,  
I fear the power of Percy is too weak  
To wage an **instant trial** with the king.

SIR MICHAEL Why, my good lord, you need not fear.  
There is Douglas and Lord Mortimer.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK No, Mortimer is not there.

SIR MICHAEL But there is Mordake, Vernon, Lord Harry Percy,  
And there is my lord of Worcester and a **head**  
Of gallant warriors, noble gentlemen.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK And so there is. But yet the king hath  
drawn

The **special head** of all the land together:  
The Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster,  
The noble Westmorland and warlike Blunt;  
And many more **corrivals** and **dear** men  
Of **estimation** and command in arms.

SIR MICHAEL Doubt not, my lord, he shall be well opposed.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK I hope no less, yet needful 'tis to fear.  
And, to prevent the worst, Sir Michael, speed;  
For if Lord Percy **thrive** not, ere the king  
Dismiss his power, he means to visit us,  
For he hath heard of our **confederacy**,  
And 'tis but wisdom to **make strong** against him:  
Therefore make haste. I must go write again

To other friends, and so farewell, Sir Michael.

*Exeunt*

## Act 5 Scene 1

***running scene 15***

---

***Location:** the king's camp near Shrewsbury*

*Enter the King, Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster, Earl of Westmorland, Sir Walter Blunt and Falstaff*

KING HENRY IV How bloodily the sun begins to peer  
Above yon **busky** hill! The day looks pale

At his **distemperature**.

PRINCE HENRY    The southern wind  
Doth play **the trumpet** to his purposes,  
And by his hollow whistling in the leaves  
Foretells a tempest and a blust'ring day.

KING HENRY IV    Then with the losers let it sympathize,  
For nothing can seem **foul** to those that win.

*The trumpet sounds*

*Enter Worcester [and Vernon]*

How now, my lord of Worcester? 'Tis not well  
That you and I should meet upon such terms  
As now we meet. You have deceived our trust,  
And made us **doff** our **easy** robes of peace,  
To crush our old limbs in **ungentle steel**:  
This is not well, my lord, this is not well.  
What say you to it? Will you again **unknit**  
This **churlish** knot of all-abhorrèd war?  
And move in that obedient **orb** again  
Where you did give a fair and natural light,  
And be no more an **exhaled meteor**,  
A **prodigy** of fear and a portent  
Of **broachèd mischief** to the **unborn times**?

WORCESTER    Hear me, my liege:  
For mine own part, I could be well content  
To **entertain** the **lag-end** of my life  
With quiet hours, for I do protest,  
I have not sought the day of this **dislike**.

KING HENRY IV    You have not sought it? How comes it, then?

FALSTAFF Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it.

PRINCE HENRY Peace, [chewet](#), peace!

WORCESTER It pleased your majesty to turn your looks  
Of favour from myself and all our house;  
And yet I must [remember](#) you, my lord,  
We were the first and dearest of your friends.  
For you my [staff of office](#) did I break  
In Richard's time, and [posted](#) day and night  
To meet you on the way, and kiss your hand,  
When yet you were in place and in account  
[Nothing](#) so strong and fortunate as I.  
It was myself, my brother and his son,  
That [brought](#) you home and boldly did [outdare](#)  
The danger of the time. You swore to us,  
And you did swear that oath at [Doncaster](#),  
That you [did nothing of purpose gainst the state](#),  
Nor claim no further than your [new-fall'n right](#),  
The [seat](#) of [Gaunt](#), dukedom of Lancaster.  
To this we swore our aid. But in short space  
It rained down fortune show'ring on your head,  
And such a flood of greatness fell on you —  
What with our help, what with the absent king,  
What with the [injuries](#) of [wanton](#) time,  
The [seeming sufferances](#) that you had borne,  
And the [contrarious](#) winds that held the king  
So long in the [unlucky](#) Irish wars  
That all in England did [repute](#) him dead —  
And from this swarm of fair advantages  
You took [occasion](#) to be quickly [wooed](#)  
To [gripe](#) the [general sway](#) into your hand,  
Forgot your oath to us at Doncaster,

And being fed by us, you used us so  
As that **ungentle gull**, the **cuckoo's bird**,  
**Useth the sparrow**, did oppress our nest,  
Grew by our feeding to so great a bulk  
That even **our love durst not** come near your sight  
For fear of **swallowing**. But with nimble wing  
We were enforced, for safety sake, to fly  
Out of your sight and raise this present head,  
Whereby we stand **opposèd by such means**  
As you yourself have forged against yourself  
By **unkind** usage, dangerous countenance,  
And violation of all faith and **troth**  
Sworn to us in your **younger** enterprise.

KING HENRY IV These things indeed you have articulated,  
Proclaimed at market-crosses, read in churches,  
To **face** the garment of rebellion  
With some fine **colour** that may please the eye  
Of fickle **changelings** and poor **discontents**,  
Which gape and **rub the elbow** at the news  
Of **hurly-burly innovation**:  
And never yet did insurrection **want**  
Such **water-colours** to **impaint** his cause,  
Nor **moody** beggars, starving for a time  
Of pell-mell **havoc** and confusion.

PRINCE HENRY In **both our** armies there is many a soul  
Shall pay full dearly for this encounter,  
If once they join in **trial**. Tell your nephew,  
The Prince of Wales doth join with all the world  
In praise of Henry Percy: **by my hopes** —  
This present enterprise **set off his head** —  
I do not think a **braver** gentleman,

More active-valiant or more valiant-young,  
More daring or more bold, is now alive  
To grace this latter age with noble deeds.  
For my part, I may speak it to my shame,  
I have a truant been to chivalry,  
And so I hear he doth account me too.  
Yet this before my father's majesty:  
I am content that he shall take the odds  
Of his great name and estimation,  
And will, to save the blood on either side,  
Try fortune with him in a single fight.

KING HENRY IV    And, Prince of Wales, so dare we venture thee,  
Albeit considerations infinite  
Do make against it. No, good Worcester, no,  
We love our people well; even those we love  
That are misled upon your cousin's part.  
And, will they take the offer of our grace,  
Both he and they and you, yea, every man  
Shall be my friend again and I'll be his.  
So tell your cousin, and bring me word  
What he will do. But if he will not yield,  
Rebuke and dread correction wait on us  
And they shall do their office. So, be gone,  
We will not now be troubled with reply.  
We offer fair, take it advisedly.

*Exeunt Worcester [and Vernon]*

PRINCE HENRY    It will not be accepted, on my life.  
The Douglas and the Hotspur both together  
Are confident against the world in arms.

KING HENRY IV Hence, therefore, every leader to his charge,  
For on their answer will we set on them;  
And God befriend us as our cause is just!

*Exeunt all but Prince and Falstaff*

FALSTAFF Hal, if thou see me down in the battle and bestride  
me, so; 'tis a point of friendship.

PRINCE HENRY Nothing but a colossus can do thee that  
friendship. Say thy prayers, and farewell.

FALSTAFF I would it were bedtime, Hal, and all well.

PRINCE HENRY Why, thou ow'st heaven a death.

*[Exit Prince Henry]*

FALSTAFF 'Tis not due yet. I would be loath to pay him before  
his day. What need I be so forward with him that calls not  
on

me? Well, 'tis no matter, honour pricks me on. But how if  
honour prick me off when I come on? How then? Can  
honour set to a leg? No. Or an arm? No. Or take away the  
grief of a wound? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery,  
then?

No. What is honour? A word. What is that word 'honour'?  
Air. A trim reckoning! Who hath it? He that died  
o'Wednesday. Doth he feel it? No. Doth he hear it? No. Is  
it

insensible, then? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with  
the  
living? No. Why? Detraction will not suffer it. Therefore  
I'll



none of it. Honour is a mere **scutcheon**: and so ends my **catechism**.

*Exit*

## Act 5 Scene 2

*running scene 16*

---

**Location:** *the rebel camp near Shrewsbury, then the battlefield*

*Enter Worcester and Sir Richard Vernon*

WORCESTER O, no, my nephew must not know, Sir Richard,  
The liberal kind offer of the king.

VERNON 'Twere best he did.

WORCESTER Then we are all **undone**.  
It is not possible, it cannot be,  
The king would keep his word in loving us.  
He will suspect us **still** and find a time  
To punish this offence in other faults.  
**Supposition** all our lives shall be **stuck full of eyes**;  
For treason is but trusted like the fox,  
Who, **ne'er so tame**, so cherished and locked up,  
Will have a wild **trick** of his ancestors.  
**Look how he can, or sad** or merrily,  
Interpretation will **misquote** our looks,  
And we shall feed like **oxen** at a stall,  
**The better cherished, still the nearer death.**

My nephew's **trespass** may be well forgot,  
It hath the excuse of youth and heat of blood,  
And an **adopted name of privilege**,  
A **hare-brained Hotspur**, governed by a **spleen**:  
All his offences **live upon** my head  
And on his father's. We did **train** him on,  
And, his corruption being **ta'en** from us,  
We as the **spring** of all, shall pay for all.  
Therefore, good cousin, let not Harry know,  
**In any case**, the offer of the king.

VERNON **Deliver what you will, I'll say 'tis so.**  
Here comes your cousin.

*Enter Hotspur [and Douglas]*

HOTSPUR My uncle is returned.  
**Deliver up** my lord of Westmorland.—  
Uncle, what news?

WORCESTER The king will bid you **battle** presently.

DOUGLAS **Defy him by** the lord of Westmorland.

HOTSPUR Lord Douglas, go you and tell him so.

DOUGLAS Marry, and shall, and very willingly.

*Exit Douglas*

WORCESTER There is no **seeming** mercy in the king.

HOTSPUR Did you beg any? God forbid!

WORCESTER I told him **gently** of our grievances,  
Of his oath-breaking, which he **mended** thus,  
By now **forswearing that he is forsworn**.

He calls us rebels, traitors, and will scourge  
With haughty arms this hateful name in us.

*Enter Douglas*

DOUGLAS   Arm, gentlemen, to arms! For I have thrown  
A brave defiance in King Henry's teeth,  
And Westmorland that was engaged did bear it,  
Which cannot choose but bring him quickly on.

WORCESTER   The Prince of Wales stepped forth before the king,  
And, nephew, challenged you to single fight.

HOTSPUR   O, would the quarrel lay upon our heads,  
And that no man might draw short breath today  
But I and Harry Monmouth! Tell me, tell me,  
How showed his talking? Seemed it in contempt?

VERNON   No, by my soul. I never in my life  
Did hear a challenge urged more modestly,  
Unless a brother should a brother dare  
To gentle exercise and proof of arms.  
He gave you all the duties of a man,  
Trimmed up your praises with a princely tongue,  
Spoke your deservings like a chronicle,  
Making you ever better than his praise  
By still dispraising praise valued with you.  
And, which became him like a prince indeed,  
He made a blushing cital of himself,  
And chid his truant youth with such a grace  
As if he mastered there a double spirit  
Of teaching and of learning instantly.  
There did he pause. But let me tell the world,  
If he outlive the envy of this day,

England did never **owe** so sweet a hope,  
So much misconstrued in his **wantonness**.

HOTSPUR Cousin, I think thou art enamourèd

**On** his follies: never did I hear  
Of any prince **so wild a liberty**.

But be he as he will, yet once ere night  
I will embrace him with a soldier's arm,  
That he shall **shrink under my courtesy**.

Arm, arm with speed. And, fellows, soldiers, friends,  
**Better consider what you have to do**  
**Than I, that have not well the gift of tongue,**  
**Can lift your blood up with persuasion.**

*Enter a Messenger*

MESSENGER My lord, here are letters for you.

HOTSPUR I cannot read them now.

O, gentlemen, the time of life is short!  
**To** spend that shortness basely were too long,  
**If** life did ride upon a **dial's point**,  
Still ending at the arrival of an hour.  
And if we live, we live to tread on kings,  
If die, **brave** death, when princes die with us!  
Now, for our consciences, the arms are **fair**,  
When the intent for bearing them is just.

*Enter another Messenger*

MESSENGER My lord, prepare, the king comes on **apace**.

HOTSPUR I thank him, that he **cuts me** from my tale,  
For I **profess not** talking. Only this:

Let each man do his best. And here I draw a sword  
Whose worthy **temper** I intend to stain  
With the best blood that I can meet withal  
In the **adventure** of this perilous day.  
Now, **Esperance!** Percy! And set on.  
Sound all the lofty **instruments** of war,  
And by that music let us all embrace,  
For, **heaven to earth**, some of us never shall  
A second time do such a courtesy.

*They embrace [and exeunt]. The trumpets sound. The King  
entereth with his power. Alarum unto the battle. Then enter  
Douglas and Sir Walter Blunt [dressed like the King]*

BLUNT What is thy name, that in battle thus  
Thou crossest me? What honour dost thou seek  
Upon my head?

DOUGLAS Know then, my name is Douglas,  
And I do **haunt** thee in the battle thus  
Because some tell me that thou art a king.

BLUNT They tell thee true.

DOUGLAS The Lord of Stafford **dear** today hath **bought  
Thy likeness**, for instead of thee, King Harry,  
This sword hath ended him. So shall it thee,  
Unless thou yield thee as a prisoner.

BLUNT I was not born to yield, thou haughty Scot,  
And thou shalt find a king that will revenge  
Lord Stafford's death.

*Fight. Blunt is slain*

*Then enters Hotspur*

HOTSPUR O Douglas, had'st thou fought at Holmedon thus,  
I never had triumphed o'er a Scot.

DOUGLAS All's done, all's won, here breathless lies the king.

HOTSPUR Where?

DOUGLAS Here.

HOTSPUR This, Douglas? No. I know this face full well:  
A gallant knight he was, his name was Blunt,  
Semblably furnished like the king himself.

DOUGLAS Ah, fool, go with thy soul, whither it goes!  
A borrowed title hast thou bought too dear.  
Why didst thou tell me that thou wert a king?

HOTSPUR The king hath many marching in his coats.

DOUGLAS Now, by my sword, I will kill all his coats.  
I'll murder all his wardrobe, piece by piece,  
Until I meet the king.

HOTSPUR Up, and away!  
Our soldiers stand full fairly for the day.

*Exeunt*

*Alarum, and enter Falstaff, solus*

FALSTAFF Though I could scape shot-free at London, I fear the  
shot here: here's no scoring but upon the pate. Soft! Who  
are

you? Sir Walter Blunt. There's honour for you! Here's no  
vanity! I am as hot as molten lead, and as heavy too;  
heaven

keep lead out of me! I need no more weight than mine own

bowels. I have led my ragamuffins where they are peppered:

there's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive, and they

for the town's end, to beg during life. But who comes here?

*Enter the Prince*

PRINCE HENRY     What, stand'st thou idle here? Lend me thy sword.

Many a nobleman lies stark and stiff  
Under the hoofs of vaunting enemies,  
Whose deaths are unrevenged. Prithee  
Lend me thy sword.

FALSTAFF     O Hal, I prithee give me leave to breathe awhile.

Turk Gregory never did such deeds in arms as I have done  
this day. I have paid Percy, I have made him sure.

PRINCE HENRY     He is, indeed, and living to kill thee. I prithee  
lend

me thy sword.

FALSTAFF     Nay, Hal, if Percy be alive, thou get'st not my  
sword;

but take my pistol, if thou wilt.

PRINCE HENRY     Give it me. What, is it in the case?

FALSTAFF     Ay, Hal, 'tis hot. There's that will sack a city.

*The Prince draws out a bottle of sack*

PRINCE HENRY    What, is it a time to jest and dally now?

*Exit. [He] throws it at him [as he leaves]*

FALSTAFF    If Percy be alive, I'll **pierce** him. If he do come in my

way, **so**: if he do not, if I come in his willingly, let him make a

**carbonado** of me. I like not such **grinning honour** as Sir Walter hath. Give me life, which if I can save, **so**: if not, honour comes **unlooked for**, and there's **an end**.

*Exit*

## Act 5 Scene 3

*running scene 16 continues*

***Location:** the battlefield at Shrewsbury*

*Alarum. **Excursions**. Enter the King, the Prince, Lord John of Lancaster and Earl of Westmorland*

*The Prince has been wounded*

KING HENRY IV    I prithee,  
Harry, withdraw thyself, thou bleed'st too much.  
Lord John of Lancaster, go you with him.

PRINCE JOHN    Not I, my lord, unless I did bleed too.



PRINCE HENRY I beseech your majesty, **make up**,  
Lest your **retirement** do **amaze** your friends.

KING HENRY IV I will do so.  
My lord of Westmorland, lead him to his tent.

WESTMORLAND Come, my lord, I'll lead you to your tent.

PRINCE HENRY Lead me, my lord? I do not need your help;  
And heaven forbid a shallow scratch should drive  
The Prince of Wales from such a field as this,  
Where **stained** nobility lies trodden on,  
And rebels' arms triumph in massacres!

PRINCE JOHN We **breathe** too long: come, cousin Westmorland,  
Our duty this way lies. For heaven's sake, come.

*[Exeunt Lancaster and Westmorland]*

PRINCE HENRY By heaven, thou hast deceived me, Lancaster.  
I did not think thee lord of such a spirit:  
Before, I loved thee as a brother, John;  
But now, I do respect thee as my soul.

KING HENRY IV I saw him hold Lord Percy at the **point**  
With **lustier maintenance** than I did look for  
Of such an **ungrown** warrior.

PRINCE HENRY O, this boy lends **mettle** to us all!

*Exit*

*Enter Douglas*

DOUGLAS Another king? They grow like **Hydra's heads**.  
I am the Douglas, fatal to all those

That wear those colours on them. What art thou,  
That counterfeit'st the person of a king?

KING HENRY IV     The king himself, who, Douglas, grieves at heart

So many of his shadows thou hast met  
And not the very king. I have two boys  
Seek Percy and thyself about the field:  
But, seeing thou fall'st on me so luckily,  
I will assay thee, so defend thyself.

DOUGLAS     I fear thou art another counterfeit,  
And yet, in faith, thou bear'st thee like a king.  
But mine I am sure thou art, whoever thou be,  
And thus I win thee.

*They fight, the King being in danger*

### *Enter Prince*

PRINCE HENRY     Hold up thy head, vile Scot, or thou art like  
Never to hold it up again! The spirits  
Of valiant Shirley, Stafford, Blunt, are in my arms;  
It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee,  
Who never promiseth but he means to pay.

*They fight. Douglas flieth*

Cheerly, my lord. How fares your grace?  
Sir Nicholas Gawsey hath for succour sent,  
And so hath Clifton: I'll to Clifton straight.

KING HENRY IV     Stay, and breathe awhile.  
Thou hast redeemed thy lost opinion,

And showed thou mak'st some tender of my life,  
In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.

PRINCE HENRY O heaven! They did me too much injury  
That ever said I hearkened to your death.  
If it were so, I might have let alone  
The insulting hand of Douglas over you,  
Which would have been as speedy in your end  
As all the poisonous potions in the world  
And saved the treacherous labour of your son.

KING HENRY IV Make up to Clifton, I'll to Sir Nicholas Gawsey.

*Exit*

*Enter Hotspur*

HOTSPUR If I mistake not, thou art Harry Monmouth.

PRINCE HENRY Thou speak'st as if I would deny my name.

HOTSPUR My name is Harry Percy.

PRINCE HENRY Why, then I see  
A very valiant rebel of that name.  
I am the Prince of Wales; and think not, Percy,  
To share with me in glory any more:  
Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere,  
Nor can one England brook a double reign,  
Of Harry Percy and the Prince of Wales.

HOTSPUR Nor shall it, Harry, for the hour is come  
To end the one of us; and would to heaven  
Thy name in arms were now as great as mine!

PRINCE HENRY I'll make it greater ere I part from thee,  
And all the budding honours on thy crest

I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.

HOTSPUR I can no longer brook thy **vanities**.

*Fight*

*Enter Falstaff*

FALSTAFF Well **said**, Hal! To it Hal! Nay, you shall find no boy's  
play here, I can tell you.

*Enter Douglas, he fights with Falstaff, who falls down as if he were dead*

*[Exit Douglas]*

*The Prince **killeth** Percy [Hotspur]*

HOTSPUR O, Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth!  
I better brook the loss of **brittle** life  
Than those proud **titles** thou hast won of me.  
They wound my thoughts worse than the sword my flesh:  
But thought's the slave of life, and life, time's fool;  
And time that takes survey of all the world  
Must have a stop. O, I could **prophesy**,  
But that the earth and the cold hand of death  
Lies on my tongue. No, Percy, thou art dust  
And food for—

*Dies*

PRINCE HENRY For worms, brave Percy. Farewell, great heart!

**Ill-weaved** ambition, how much art thou shrunk?

When that this body did contain a spirit,

A kingdom for it was **too small a bound**,

But now two paces of the vilest earth

Is room enough. This earth that bears thee dead

Bears not alive so **stout** a gentleman.

If thou wert **sensible** of courtesy,

I should not make so great a **show of zeal**,

But let my **favours** hide thy mangled face,

*Covers Hotspur's face*

And, even in thy behalf, I'll thank myself

For doing these fair rites of tenderness.

Adieu, and take thy praise with thee to heaven!

Thy **ignominy** sleep with thee in the grave,

But not remembered in thy epitaph!—

What? Old acquaintance? Could not all this flesh

*He sees Falstaff on the ground*

Keep in a little life? Poor Jack, farewell!

I could have better spared a better man.

O, I should have a **heavy miss of thee**,

If I were much in love with vanity!

Death hath not struck so fat a deer today,

Though many **dearer**, in this bloody fray.

**Embowelled** will I see thee by and by:

Till then **in blood** by noble Percy lie.

*Exit*

*Falstaff riseth up*

FALSTAFF Embowelled! If thou embowel me today, I'll give you

leave to powder me and eat me too tomorrow. 'Twas time to

counterfeit, or that hot termagant Scot had paid me scot and

lot too. Counterfeit? I am no counterfeit; to die, is to be a counterfeit, for he is but the counterfeit of a man who hath

not the life of a man. But to counterfeit dying, when a man

thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed. The better part of valour is discretion, in the which better part I have saved my life. I am

afraid of this gunpowder Percy, though he be dead. How, if

he should counterfeit too and rise? I am afraid he would prove the better counterfeit: therefore I'll make him sure, yea, and I'll swear I killed him. Why may not he rise as well

as I? Nothing confutes me but eyes, and nobody sees me. Therefore, sirrah, with a new wound in your

*Stabs him*

thigh, come you along with me.

*Takes Hotspur on his back*

*Enter Prince and John of Lancaster*

PRINCE HENRY     Come, brother John, full bravely hast thou  
*fleshed*

Thy *maiden sword*.

PRINCE JOHN     But, soft! Who have we here?  
Did you not tell me this fat man was dead?

PRINCE HENRY     I did. I saw him dead,  
Breathless and bleeding on the ground.—  
Art thou alive? Or is it *fantasy*

*To Falstaff*

That plays upon our eyesight? I prithee speak.  
We will not trust our eyes without our ears.  
Thou art not what thou seem'st.

FALSTAFF     No, that's certain: I am not a *double man*. But if I  
be  
not *Jack* Falstaff, then am I a jack. There is

*Throws the body down*

Percy. If your father will do me any honour,  
so: if not, let him kill the next Percy himself. I look to be  
either earl or duke, I can assure you.

PRINCE HENRY     Why, Percy I killed myself and saw thee dead.

FALSTAFF     Didst thou? Lord, Lord, how the world is given to  
lying! I grant you I was down and out of breath, and so  
was

he. But we rose both *at an instant* and fought a long hour  
by  
*Shrewsbury clock*. If I may be believed, so: if not, let them

that should reward valour bear the sin upon their own  
heads. I'll **take't on my death**, I gave him this wound in  
the  
thigh: if the man were alive and would deny it, I would  
make  
him eat a piece of my sword.

PRINCE JOHN This is the strangest tale that e'er I heard.

PRINCE HENRY This is the strangest fellow, brother John.—  
Come, bring your **luggage** nobly on your back.

*To Falstaff*

For my part, if a lie may **do thee grace**,  
I'll **gild** it with the **happiest** terms I have.—

*A retreat is sounded*

**The trumpets sound retreat, the day is ours.—**  
Come, brother, let's to the **highest** of the field,  
To see what friends are living, who are dead.

*Exeunt [Prince Henry and Lancaster]*

FALSTAFF I'll follow, as they say, for reward. He that rewards  
me, heaven reward him! If I **do grow great again, I'll grow**  
**less**, for I'll **purge**, and **leave** sack, and live cleanly as a  
nobleman should do.

*Exit*



## Act 5 Scene 4

*running scene 16 continues*

---

*The trumpets sound. Enter the King, Prince of Wales, Lord John of Lancaster, Earl of Westmorland [and others], with Worcester and Vernon prisoners*

KING HENRY IV Thus ever did rebellion find rebuke.

Ill-spirited Worcester, did we not send grace,  
Pardon and terms of love to all of you?  
And wouldst thou turn our offers contrary?  
Misuse the tenor of thy kinsman's trust?  
Three knights upon our party slain today,  
A noble earl and many a creature else  
Had been alive this hour,  
If like a Christian thou hadst truly borne  
Betwixt our armies true intelligence.

WORCESTER What I have done my safety urged me to,  
And I embrace this fortune patiently,  
Since not to be avoided it falls on me.

KING HENRY IV Bear Worcester to death and Vernon too:  
Other offenders we will pause upon.

*Exeunt Worcester and Vernon, [guarded]*

How goes the field?

PRINCE HENRY The noble Scot, Lord Douglas, when he saw  
The fortune of the day quite turned from him,  
The noble Percy slain, and all his men  
Upon the foot of fear, fled with the rest;

And falling from a hill, he was so bruised  
That the pursuers took him. At my tent  
The Douglas is, and I beseech your grace  
I may dispose of him.

KING HENRY IV    With all my heart.

PRINCE HENRY    Then, brother John of Lancaster, to you  
This honourable bounty shall belong:  
Go to the Douglas, and deliver him  
Up to his pleasure, ransomless and free:  
His valour shown upon our crests today  
Hath taught us how to cherish such high deeds  
Even in the bosom of our adversaries.

KING HENRY IV    Then this remains, that we divide our power.—  
You, son John, and my cousin Westmorland  
Towards York shall bend you with your dearest speed,  
To meet Northumberland and the prelate Scroop,  
Who, as we hear, are busily in arms.—  
Myself and you, son Harry, will towards Wales,  
To fight with Glendower and the Earl of March.  
Rebellion in this land shall lose his way,  
Meeting the check of such another day.  
And since this business so fair is done,  
Let us not leave till all our own be won.

*Exeunt*

## TEXTUAL NOTES

Q = First Quarto text of 1598

Q5 = Fifth Quarto text of 1613

Q7 = Seventh Quarto text of 1632

F = First Folio text of 1623

F2 = a correction introduced in the Second Folio text of 1632

F3 = a correction introduced in the Third Folio text of 1663–64

Ed = a correction introduced by a later editor

SD = stage direction

SH = speech heading (i.e. speaker's name)

**List of Parts** = Ed BARDOLPH = F. Q = *Bardoll*

**1.1.64 Stained** = Q. F = Strain'd **66 welcome** = Q. F = welcomes **76 In...is** = Ed. F *includes at end of king's speech, making his answer his own rhetorical question*

**1.2.0 SD Falstaff** = Ed. F = *Falstaffe and Pointz (it is conceivable that Poins enters here and remains silently in the background during the first 98 lines of dialogue, but more likely that he enters when his name is mentioned at line 94)* **38 of Hybla** = Q. Not in F **72 similes** = Q5. F = smiles **80 for...it** = F. Q = for wisdom cries out in the streets and no man regards it **94 Poins** set as a speech heading in F **110 had been** = Q. F = had **145 Peto, Bardolph** = Ed. F = *Haruey, Rossill (Shakespeare's original names for these characters)* **195 foil** = Q. F = soyle

**1.3.24 name** = Q. Not in F **27 As...son** = F. Q = As is deliuered to your maiestie. / Either enuie therefore, or misprision, / Is guiltie of

this fault, and not my sonne (F is more likely to be purposeful revision than compositorial error) **43 bore** = Q. F = bare **45 corpse spelled** Coarse in F **68 this** = F. Q = his **78 yet he doth** = Q. F = yet doth **136 downfall** = F. Q = down-trod **164 wore** = F. Q = weare **239 poisoned him** = F. Q = him poisoned **256 candy** = Q. F = caudie **303 Lord** = Ed. F = loe

**2.1.31 SH FIRST CARRIER** = Ed. F = *Car.*

**2.2.0 SD and Bardolph** (not in F but implied by Q's "and Peto &c.") **10 thief's** = Q. F = Theefe **12 square spelled** squire in F **27 me my** = Q. F = my **46 SH BARDOLPH** = Ed. F = *Bardolfe*, what newes? (continuation of Poins' speech) **47 SH GADSHILL** = Ed. F = *Bar.* **71 SH FIRST TRAVELLER** = Ed. F = *Tra.* **76 Ah, whoreson** = Ed. F = a whorson

**2.3.1 SH HOTSPUR** = Ed. *Not in F* **15 our friends** = Q. F = our Friend **54 beads** = Q. F = beds **108 well believe** = Q. F = will beleeeue **110 far will** = Q. F = farre wilt

**2.4.106 and foot them** = Q. *Not in F* **114 with lime in't** F (uncorrected) reads with in't F (corrected) reads with lime **132 SH POINS** = Q. F = *Prin.* **178 ward** = Q. F = word **208 the** = F. Q = their **221 plentiful** = Q. F = plentie **305 talon spelled** Talent in F **308 Braby** = F. Q = Bracy **309 That** = Q. F = The **316 that** = Q. F = the **364 tristful** = Ed. F = trustfull **378 sun spelled** Sonne in F **444 most** = Q. F = most most **502 march** = Q. F = Match

**3.1.46 the** = F. Q = he **67 sent** = Q. F = hent **135 on** = Ed. Q/F = an **193 our** = Q. F = your **220 'twixt** = Q. F = betwixt **228 hence** = Q. F = thence

**3.2.113 swaddling spelled** swathing in F **154 heaven...survive** = F. Q = God I promise heere, / The which if he be pleasd I shall performe (F alteration due to 1606 Parliamentary "Act to Restrain the Abuses of Players") **158 bonds spelled** Bands in F.

**3.2.20 my** = Q. F = thy **31 son spelled** Sunne in F **49 tithe** = Ed. F = tight **65 your** = Q. F = you: **76 sneak-cup** = F. Q = sneakeup **120 owed spelled** ought in F **156 and cherish** = F. Q = cherish (F sets this speech as verse, though it is prose in Q; seems to have been

*added in an attempt to create a pentameter line)* **158 prithee** = Q. F  
= I prithee

**4.1.21 I his mind** = F. Q = I my mind. Ed = I, my lord **45 not.**  
**His** = Ed. F = not his **63 hair** = Q. F = Heire **81 our** = Q. F =  
your **88 as** = Q. F = Atdream = F. Q = tearme **92 with him** =  
Q. F = with **127 hot** = Q. F = not

**4.2.3 Coldfield** = Ed. F = cop-hill **18 fowl** = Q. F = Foole **31**  
**tattered** = F3. F = totter'd

**4.4.0 SD Michael** spelled Michell in F

**5.1.47 swore** = Q. F = sware **72 your younger** = Q. F = yonger  
**136 Is it** = F. Q = tis

**5.2.8 other** = Q. F = others **31 news** = Q. F = newe- **52 talking**  
= F. Q = tasking **73 a liberty** = Q. F = at Liberty **79 Than** = Q.  
F = That **89 are** = Q. F = is **139 ragamuffins** = Ed. F = rag of  
Muffins **143 lies** = Q. F = likes

**5.3.6 Lest your** = Q. F = Least you **63 that** = F. Q = the **93 thee**  
**dead** = Q7. Q/F = the dead **127 with me** = Q. F = me

## OATHS FROM THE QUARTO

The following oaths were altered in the Folio text as a result of the Parliamentary Act to Restrain the Abuses of Players (spelling has been modernized in this list):

|           | <i>QUARTO</i>  | <i>FOLIO</i>  |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1.2.18    | No, by my troth, not so much                           | No, not so much   |
| 1.2.36    | By the Lord, thou say'st true, lad                     | Thou say'st true, lad                                   |
| 1.2.58    | By the Lord, I'll be a brave judge                     | I'll be a brave judge                                   |
| 1.2.66    | Zblood,* I am as melancholy as a gibcat                | I am as melancholy as a gib cat                         |
| 1.2.74–5  | I would to God thou and I knew                         | I would thou and I knew                                 |
| 1.2.86    | By the Lord, an I do not                               | An I do not   |
| 1.2.89    | Zounds,** where thou wilt, lad                         | Where thou wilt, lad                                    |
| 1.2.123   | Not I, by my faith                                     | Not I   |
| 1.2.130   | By the Lord, I'll be traitor then                      | I'll be a traitor then                                  |
| 1.2.135–6 | Well, God give thee the spirit . . . and him the . . . | Well, mayst thou have the spirit . . . and he the . . . |

\* Zblood God's blood.

\*\* Zounds God's wounds

|          | <i>QUARTO</i>                               | <i>FOLIO</i>                           |
|----------|---|--|
| 1.3.132  | Zounds, I will speak of<br>him              | Yes, I will speak of him               |
| 1.3.219  | By God, he shall not<br>have a Scot         | By heaven, he shall not<br>have a Scot |
| 1.3.253  | Zblood, when you and<br>he came back        | When you and he came<br>back           |
| 1.3.264  | I have done, i'faith                        | I have done, in sooth                  |
| 2.1.15   | By the mass, there is<br>ne'er a king       | There is ne'er a king                  |
| 2.1.25   | God's body, the turkeys                     | The turkeys                            |
| 2.1.34   | Nay, by God, soft, I<br>know                | Nay, soft, I pray ye; I<br>know        |
| 2.1.74   | and yet, zounds, I lie                      | And yet, I lie                         |
| 2.1.83   | Nay, by my faith, I<br>think you are        | Nay, I think rather you<br>are         |
| 2.2.32   | Zblood, I'll not bear<br>mine own flesh     | I'll not bear mine own<br>flesh        |
| 2.2.58   | Zounds, will they not<br>rob us             | Will they not rob us                   |
| 2.3.14   | By the Lord, our plot                       | I protest, our plot                    |
| 2.3.19   | Zounds, an I were                           | By this hand if I were                 |
| 2.3.77-8 | In faith I'll know your<br>business         | In sooth, I'll know your<br>business   |
| 2.3.85   | In faith I'll break                         | Indeed, I'll break                     |
| 2.4.8    | upon their salvation                        | upon their confidence                  |
| 2.4.11   | a good boy, by the Lord,<br>so they call me | a good boy                             |
| 2.4.121  | I could sing psalms or<br>anything          | I could sing all manner<br>of songs    |

|           | <i>QUARTO</i>                                  | <i>FOLIO</i>                        |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 2.4.132   | Zounds, ye fat paunch                          | Ye fat paunch                       |
| 2.4.132   | call me coward, by the<br>Lord, I'll stab thee | call me coward, I'll stab<br>thee   |
| 2.4.174   | Pray God                                       | Pray heaven                         |
| 2.4.218-9 | Zounds, an I were at<br>the strappado          | No. Were I at the<br>strappado      |
| 2.4.226   | Zblood, you starveling                         | Away, you starveling                |
| 2.4.246   | By the Lord, I knew ye<br>as well as he        | I knew ye as well as he             |
| 2.4.253   | But by the Lord, lads                          | But, lads                           |
| 2.4.261   | O Jesu, my lord the<br>prince                  | My lord the prince                  |
| 2.4.275   | Now sirs, by our lady,<br>you fought fair      | Now, sirs: you fought<br>fair       |
| 2.4.279   | Faith, tell me now                             | Tell me now                         |
| 2.4.343   | Not a whit, i'faith                            | Not a whit                          |
| 2.4.361   | O Jesu, this is excellent<br>sport             | This is excellent sport             |
| 2.4.366   | O Jesu, he doth it as<br>like                  | O, rare, he doth it as like         |
| 2.4.409   | Zblood, my lord, they<br>are false             | I'faith, my lord, they<br>are false |
| 2.4.410   | for a young prince,<br>i'faith                 | for a young prince                  |
| 2.4.434   | God help the wicked                            | heaven help the wicked              |
| 2.4.444   | O Jesu, my lord, my<br>lord                    | O, my lord, my lord                 |
| 3.2.4     | I know not whether<br>God will have it so      | . . . whether heaven<br>will . . .  |
| 3.2.29    | God pardon                                     | Heaven pardon                       |



|           | <i>QUARTO</i>                               | <i>FOLIO</i>                         |
|-----------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 3.2.131   | And God forgive                             | And heaven forgive                   |
| 3.2.154   | This, in the name of<br>God, I promise here | . . . in the name of<br>heaven . . . |
| 3.3.30    | By this fire, that's<br>God's angel         | By this fire                         |
| 3.3.41    | God reward me for it.                       | Heaven reward me for it!             |
| 3.3.42    | Zblood, I would my<br>face were             | I would my face were                 |
| 3.3.43    | Godamercy,* so<br>should I                  | So should I                          |
| 3.3.54    | I defy thee: God's light,<br>I was never    | I defy thee. I was never             |
| 3.3.74    | O Jesu, I have heard                        | I have heard                         |
| 3.3.76    | Zblood and he                               | An if he                             |
| 3.3.78    | in that door i'faith                        | in that door                         |
| 3.3.104   | Why a thing to thank<br>God on.             | Why, a thing to thank<br>heaven on.  |
| 3.3.105   | I am no thing to thank<br>God on,           | I am no thing to thank<br>heaven on, |
| 3.3.136–7 | I pray God my girdle<br>break               | let my girdle break                  |
| 4.1.6     | By God I cannot flatter                     | By heaven. I cannot<br>flatter       |
| 4.1.18    | Zounds, how has he<br>the leisure           | How? Has he the leisure              |
| 4.3.44    | And God defend,                             | And heaven defend                    |
| 4.3.121   | Pray God you do                             | Pray heaven you do                   |

\* Godamercy God have mercy

|           | <i>QUARTO</i>                           | <i>FOLIO</i>                             |
|-----------|---|--|
| 5.1.127   | Why, thou owest God<br>a death          | Why, thou ow'st heaven<br>a death        |
| 5.2.137-8 | God keep lead out<br>of me              | heaven keep lead out<br>of me!           |
| 5.2.152   | Nay before God Hal, if<br>Percy         | Nay, Hal, if Percy                       |
| 5.3.11    | And God forbid                          | And heaven forbid                        |
| 5.3.16    | for God's sake come                     | For heaven's sake, come                  |
| 5.3.17    | By God thou hast                        | By heaven, thou hast                     |
| 5.3.51    | O God, they did me<br>too much injury,  | O heaven! They did<br>me too much injury |
| 5.3.70    | and would to God,                       | and would to heaven                      |
| 5.3.113-4 | Zblood, 'twas time to<br>counterfeit    | 'Twas time to<br>counterfeit             |
| 5.3.120-1 | Zounds I am afraid of<br>this gunpowder | I am afraid of this<br>gunpowder         |
| 5.3.122   | by my faith I am<br>afraid he           | I am afraid he                           |
| 5.3.150-1 | zounds I would make<br>him eat          | I would make him eat                     |
| 5.3.161   | God reward him                          | heaven reward him!                       |

## SCENE-BY-SCENE ANALYSIS

### ACT 1 SCENE 1

King Henry despairs at the civil unrest that has dominated his reign. He describes the “civil butchery,” establishing the motif of “blood” that highlights both the violent conflict and the theme of lineage and inheritance. He declares his intention to lead a long-planned Crusade to the Holy Land. He talks of the Crucifixion, “fourteen hundred years ago,” and of the “twelvemonth” plan he has had to make his Crusade, establishing the motif of time, which functions to place the events of the play in a wider historical context, as well as drawing attention to the brevity of individual man’s existence within this.

Westmorland informs Henry that the English forces, led by the “noble Mortimer,” have been defeated by the Welsh rebels, led by Glendower. Henry realizes he must put his plans for a Crusade aside, and Westmorland tells him of more fighting between Scottish insurgents and “the gallant Hotspur.../ Young Harry Percy.” Henry updates Westmorland: Hotspur defeated the “bold Scots” and took many noble prisoners: “an honourable spoil.” This emphasizes the theme of “honour,” further reinforced by Henry’s comparisons between Hotspur and his own son, Prince Henry (also called Harry): the shared name establishes the deliberate paralleling and comparison between the two young men.

Lineage and father-son relationships are addressed as the king envies Hotspur’s father, Lord Northumberland, whose son is “the theme of honour’s tongue,” while “riot and dishonour stain the brow” of his own. He also comments, however, on Hotspur’s “pride”

in only sending one noble prisoner to the king and keeping the rest. Westmorland suggests that this is due to the influence of his uncle, Worcester, who is “Malevolent” toward the king. Henry has sent for Hotspur to explain his actions.

## **ACT 1 SCENE 2**

**Lines 1–98:** Providing a comic contrast to the political/military concerns of the previous scene, Prince Henry and Falstaff exchange rapid-fire, quick-witted banter. Henry comments on his friend’s corrupt lifestyle spent drinking and visiting brothels. Despite the accusation that Falstaff is “fat-witted,” his responses show that he can be quick and entertaining in his use of language, although both men speak in prose, reflecting the “low” nature of their subject matter. Falstaff is revealed as a robber and a freeloader, but he appears good-natured and fond of Prince Henry, sometimes addressing him in a paternal tone that serves to highlight the estranged relationship between the prince and his father. Falstaff refers to the future, when Henry will be king, reminding the audience of the obligations of birth and rank that Henry is neglecting.

**Lines 99–174:** They are joined by Poins, who reveals that he plans to rob a party of traveling pilgrims and traders, all “with fat purses,” the next morning. Falstaff agrees to join him, but Henry refuses. Poins asks Falstaff to leave them while he convinces Henry to participate. Poins explains that he has planned “a jest”: Falstaff, Peto, Bardolph, and Gadshill will commit the robbery, after which Poins and Henry will rob them of their ill-gotten gains. Henry objects that the others will know them by their horses, “and by every other appointment,” raising the question of appearance and identity. Poins suggests they leave their horses and disguise their “outward garments” with outfits of buckram. Henry agrees to the plan and Poins goes to prepare.

**Lines 175–197:** Henry's soliloquy reveals a different side to his character. Speaking in blank verse, an indication of his noble status, he compares himself to the sun (a repeated image, associated with royalty), which has permitted "the base contagious clouds / To smother up his beauty from the world." Using repeated images of concealment, disguise, and revelation, he explains that he is hiding his true character in order to appear even greater when the world witnesses his "reformation." Despite revealing a strong sense of his social status and responsibility, he is deliberately deceiving his friends and family and seems more concerned with creating a "glittering" appearance than with his obligations.

### **ACT 1 SCENE 3**

**Lines 1–124:** At court Hotspur has responded to King Henry's summons, accompanied by his father, Northumberland, and his uncle, Worcester. The king announces that he has been too "temperate," and that Hotspur has taken advantage of his "patience." He declares that from now on he will be "Mighty and to be feared." Worcester argues that their family does not deserve to be punished, particularly as they helped Henry to achieve his "greatness." Henry sends Worcester out and Northumberland pleads on his son's behalf, arguing that there has been some "envy or misprision" in the representation of his actions over the prisoners. Hotspur offers an explanation that shows his eloquence, but acknowledges his potentially rash temper. He tells Henry that, "dry with rage and extreme toil" after the lengthy battle, with his wounds still raw and "smarting," he was approached by a courtier, a "popinjay," whose foppish behavior and demands for the prisoners at that moment provoked him into rudeness. Sir Walter Blunt suggests that under such circumstances, Hotspur's actions might be overlooked, but Henry is still angry, revealing that Hotspur retains the prisoners and refuses to return them unless the king ransoms Mortimer, Hotspur's brother-in-law, from Glendower. Citing

Mortimer's marriage to Glendower's daughter as evidence of treachery, Henry refuses to ransom "revolted Mortimer." Hotspur furiously defends his brother-in-law, describing his bravery in the "bloody" battle with Glendower and accusing the king of slander. Henry forbids Hotspur to mention Mortimer again and, demanding the immediate delivery of the prisoners, he leaves.

**Lines 125–310:** Hotspur announces that even if "the devil come and roar for them" he will not hand over the prisoners. His father urges him to calm down as Worcester returns, but Hotspur ignores him, calling Henry an "unthankful king." Hotspur describes Henry's reaction to the mention of Mortimer, and Worcester reveals that Richard II (who was deposed by Henry, and murdered shortly after) named Mortimer as his successor. Hotspur now understands Henry's reluctance to help Mortimer, but is angry with his family for their role in deposing "that sweet lovely rose," Richard, and replacing him with "this thorn, this canker, Bullingbrook," and with Henry for his ingratitude for the "shames" that the family has undergone on his behalf.

Worcester tries to tell Hotspur of a "deep and dangerous" plan, but Hotspur ignores him, continuing to rail against Henry. Northumberland tells his son that he is "wasp-tongued and impatient." Eventually, Worcester is able to outline his plan to ally with the Scottish and Welsh forces against Henry. He advises Hotspur to release his Scottish prisoners without ransom and to form an alliance with the Earl of Douglas. Worcester tells Northumberland to enlist the help of the Archbishop of York, Lord Scroop, whose brother was executed by Henry. Worcester himself will go to Wales to Glendower and Mortimer, promising to arrange a meeting of all of their "powers."

## **ACT 2 SCENE 1**

At an innyard on the London–Canterbury road, two Carriers are preparing their horses. Once again, the motif of time is dominant,

establishing the night setting of the scene and reinforcing the wider temporal concerns of the play. The Carriers are interrupted by Gadshill, asking for a lantern but, suspicious of his motives, they refuse and leave. The references to darkness emphasize secrecy and deception: both the comic deception of Falstaff by Poins, and the more serious plotting against King Henry. The inn's chamberlain arrives and informs Gadshill that there are wealthy guests preparing to leave. Gadshill sets off to organize the robbery.

## **ACT 2 SCENE 2**

Farther down the highway, Poins tells Henry, Peto, and Bardolph that he has hidden Falstaff's horse for a joke. They stand aside as Falstaff approaches, angrily calling for Poins. Henry tells Falstaff to be quiet and pretends to go to find Poins, but joins the others in the darkness as they listen to Falstaff complaining and cursing them. They join him again, and Henry teases "fat-guts" Falstaff as he demands the return of his horse. Gadshill arrives with the news that there is "money of the king's" on its way down the hill. Henry says that he and Poins will go further down the lane to catch their victims if they should escape from the others, and they leave, exchanging an aside about their "disguises." Falstaff, Peto, Bardolph, and Gadshill carry out the robbery, leaving with their victims. Henry and Poins return, disguised, and hide as the robbers reenter, dividing up their profits. As Falstaff says that Poins and Henry will get nothing for being "arrant cowards," the prince and his companion set upon them. Frightened, the robbers run away, leaving the loot behind. Henry laughs at the fact that Falstaff must walk home.

## **ACT 2 SCENE 3**

Hotspur's serious plans contrast with the low and essentially comic plotting of the last two scenes, reinforcing the deliberate character contrast with Prince Henry. Hotspur is reading a letter from an unnamed nobleman, who has declined to join the rebellion. Hotspur

criticizes the letter writer as a “shallow cowardly hind,” showing his quick temper and concerns with honor. Worried that the “frosty-spirited rogue” will reveal the plot to the king, Hotspur decides that he must set off at once to join his fellow conspirators. He is interrupted by his wife, Lady Percy, demanding to know what is wrong. She complains that he has been neglecting her: instead of “pleasure and...golden sleep” in bed, he disturbs her with nightmares, talking of “prisoners’ ransom and of soldiers slain.” She is worried that her brother, Mortimer, intends to stake his claim to the throne, and that Hotspur is involved. Although their exchange reveals a loving relationship, Henry is impatient, saying that he has no time for love. He tells her that she must not question him, as, although he knows her to be “wise” and “constant,” she is a woman, and therefore not to be trusted. He consoles her with the promise that she shall soon join him.

## **ACT 2 SCENE 4**

**Lines 1–102:** Prince Henry continues to lead a disreputable existence, ignoring his noble birth and responsibilities. In the Eastcheap tavern, he boasts to Poins of his drinking exploits. In order to “drive away time” while they wait for Falstaff, he orders Poins to help him tease the young bartender, Francis. The prince mocks Francis for his limited use of language (forcing a contrast with the verbal dexterity of other characters in the play, such as himself, Falstaff, and Hotspur) and for his hardworking nature. He moves on to criticize the similarly industrious character of “the Hotspur of the north,” one of his first acknowledgments of the political world outside his current life.

**Lines 103–274:** The others arrive and, as they drink, Henry and Falstaff banter rudely with each other, demonstrating the mixture of affection and contempt that the prince feels for Falstaff, and Falstaff’s simultaneous lack of respect and awareness of Henry’s



royal status. Falstaff accuses the prince and Poins of being cowards for not taking part in the robbery. When Henry asks where the loot is, Falstaff tells how they were themselves robbed by “a hundred” men. Dramatic irony compounds the humor as Falstaff boasts of how he fought off their attackers and only escaped “by a miracle.” Encouraged by Poins and Henry, he continues to exaggerate, contradicting himself and inventing details, until the prince calls him a liar. They exchange insults until Henry reveals the truth: it was he and Poins who robbed them. Falstaff quickly recovers, claiming that he knew this, and that he did not fight back because he did not wish “to kill the heir-apparent.” They are interrupted by Hostess Quickly who announces that a nobleman has brought Henry a message from the king. Falstaff goes to “send him packing.”

**Lines 275–443:** Falstaff returns, and the prince immediately starts taunting him again, but Falstaff tells Henry that he has been summoned to court the following morning by his father. Falstaff tells Henry of the rebellion, and Hotspur’s alliance with the Welsh and Scottish forces, and urges him to prepare what he is going to say to the king the next day. In a meta-theatrical episode, they “act out” Henry’s coming interview with his father. Despite its comic overtones, this episode explores the relationships that Henry has with both Falstaff and his father. The questions that Falstaff puts to him as to whether the “son of England” should “prove a thief and take purses” emphasize the disparity between the prince’s rank and duty and his current behavior. When Falstaff uses his “role” as king to recommend that Henry keep Falstaff by him even when he banishes the others, Henry decides that they should swap places. He is playing the role of king, and abusing Falstaff, when a knocking is heard and Bardolph runs in.

**Lines 444–507:** Bardolph announces that the Watch are at the door. Hostess Quickly adds that they have come to search the house. The prince advises Falstaff to hide while he talks to the sheriff. Henry

denies that Falstaff has been there, but promises to find him and send him to the sheriff, who leaves. Peto finds Falstaff snoring behind the arras and Henry goes through his pockets, finding only a bill for food and drink. Henry tells Peto that he will go and see the king in the morning, and warns him that they “must all to the wars,” joking that he will put Falstaff in command of an infantry company.

### **ACT 3 SCENE 1**

**Lines 1–148:** The rebels meet in Wales to discuss their plans. They begin civilly, but Hotspur loses patience with Glendower’s beliefs in astrological signs. Glendower claims that King Henry fears him because, at his birth, heaven was “full of fiery shapes” and the earth “Shaked like a coward,” but Hotspur is rudely dismissive of these claims and mocks Glendower. Mortimer intervenes and they look at a map showing the potential division of land after the defeat of Henry. Mortimer announces that he, Hotspur, and Worcester will set forth the next day to meet Northumberland and the Scottish armies at Shrewsbury, while Glendower gathers his forces to meet them “in fourteen days.” Glendower promises to be with them quickly, and to bring their “ladies” with him (Kate, Lady Percy, and his own daughter, wife of Mortimer). Hotspur, however, is still looking at the map and announces that he is not satisfied that his share is equal. Showing his lack of maturity, he goads Glendower and threatens to divert the course of the River Trent. In contrast to Hotspur, Glendower remains calm and agrees to a minor change in the map before leaving to find the ladies.

**Lines 149–193:** Mortimer rebukes Hotspur for his rudeness. Hotspur complains that Glendower angers him by talking about myths and magic and “skimble-skamble stuff.” Worcester tells Hotspur that he must “amend” his behavior, providing an accurate analysis of his nephew’s character: divided between “greatness,

courage, blood” and “harsh rage...Pride, haughtiness, opinion and disdain.”

**Lines 194–268:** Glendower brings the ladies to bid good-bye. He translates the conversation between his daughter and Mortimer, as husband and wife do not speak each other’s language. Their exchange is apparently romantic, however, and she sings him a parting song in Welsh. Hotspur mocks them as he and Lady Percy wrangle affectionately, perhaps showing a more genuine relationship than that of Mortimer and his wife. Mortimer and Hotspur leave.

## **ACT 3 SCENE 2**

King Henry sends his lords away so that he can speak privately with Prince Henry. The king wonders whether God is punishing him through his son for some “displeasing service” he has done in the past. Angry and disappointed, he rebukes Prince Henry for his lifestyle of “barren pleasures [and] rude society.” Prince Henry claims that he has not behaved as badly as rumor suggests and asks for his father’s pardon, but the king continues, pointing out that the prince’s younger brother, Prince John, has had to take on his responsibilities. He argues that if he himself had been “So common-hackneyed in the eyes of men” during his campaign for the throne, he would have lost the good opinion of the public, which was so important to his cause. In an emotional appeal, he compares Prince Henry’s behavior to that of Richard II, who “Mingled his royalty with carping fools” and destroyed his popularity by being too much in the public eye. He talks about Hotspur, claiming that he “hath more worthy interest to the state” than Prince Henry does, as he has shown courage and nobility in battle, even in his challenge to the king. He ends by saying that his son is just as likely to fight against him through “fear” and “Base inclination.” Moved, Henry begs him not to “think so” and promises to redeem himself “on Percy’s head,” washing away his own “shame” with the blood of battle. His speech

is eloquent and his use of blank verse and stirring imagery form a stark contrast with his speech and behavior in previous scenes.

The king places Prince Henry in charge of the royal forces. Sir Walter Blunt brings news that the rebels are going to meet in Shrewsbury, and King Henry says that he knows this: Prince John has already set out. He announces that Prince Henry will set out “on Wednesday next,” that he will follow, and that all their forces shall meet “at Bridgnorth” in twelve days.

### **ACT 3 SCENE 3**

In the Eastcheap tavern, Falstaff and Bardolph are involved in a humorous exchange. Hostess Quickly interrupts and Falstaff demands to know if she has caught whoever picked his pocket. She is indignant at the suggestion that there are thieves in her house, and reminds him that he owes her money. He claims that as well as his money, a seal ring “worth forty mark” has been stolen, but she tells everyone that the prince said that the ring was made of copper. Falstaff denounces Henry as a “sneak-cup” and threatens to “cudgel” him. As they bicker, Prince Henry arrives. They reveal their argument to him, Falstaff claiming that he has had “three or four bonds of forty pound apiece, and a seal-ring” stolen, and the Hostess telling Henry that Falstaff spoke “most vilely of” him and claimed that the prince owes him a thousand pounds. Falstaff jokes his way out of the accusations, and Henry reveals that it was he who went through Falstaff’s pockets and found nothing of value. He asks Falstaff if he is “not ashamed,” but Falstaff is unrepentant, calling Hostess Quickly to prepare breakfast. Prince Henry reveals that he has paid back the sum taken in the robbery so Falstaff is no longer in trouble, and turns the conversation to the impending conflict, providing a serious conclusion to the boisterous comedy of the scene. Henry tells Falstaff that he has given him command of an infantry company, much to his lazy friend’s disgust, but the humor that this generates is swiftly forgotten as the prince sustains his new, more serious character.

## **ACT 4 SCENE 1**

The swift movement between the four scenes of this act emphasizes the increased pace of events.

**Lines 1–88:** Hotspur and Douglas are interrupted by a Messenger bringing news that Northumberland is “grievous sick” and unable to lead his forces to join them. Northumberland’s letter urges them to go into battle: in fact, they have no choice as the king is aware of their intentions and is preparing to fight. Worcester is concerned, but Hotspur remains optimistic, arguing that they will not be using all of their military strength at once, and will have “A rendezvous, a home to fly unto” if they are unsuccessful. Douglas agrees, but Worcester worries that it will seem as though there is a division in the rebel forces, suggesting weakness. Hotspur bravely, if naively, retains his optimism.

**Lines 89–143:** Vernon brings news that Westmorland and Prince John are marching toward them with an army of seven thousand. The king has also set out “With strong and mighty preparation.” Hotspur listens calmly, then mockingly asks about Prince Henry, “The nimble-footed madcap,” showing contempt for the prince’s lifestyle and reputation. Vernon reports, however, that Henry’s forces are “All furnished, all in arms,” “Glittering in golden coats,” “full of spirit,” and “gorgeous as the sun,” evoking Henry’s own image of himself at the end of Act 1 Scene 2. Vernon recounts how the prince himself is like a “feathered Mercury,” riding on “fiery Pegasus.” Angry at this praise of Henry, Hotspur declares himself “on fire” to go into battle. He wants to meet the prince in single combat, “Harry to Harry,” symbolically emphasizing the dramatic paralleling of the two characters. He asks after Glendower, and Vernon reveals that the Welsh leader is not ready. Worcester and Douglas are disturbed by this news, but Hotspur urges them into battle, to “die all, die merrily.”

## **ACT 4 SCENE 2**

On the march to Shrewsbury, Falstaff sends Bardolph to buy wine. Falstaff reveals how he has “misused” the power of conscription, making “in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds,” by recruiting mostly wealthy men who can buy their way back out of service. Consequently, the troops he now has assembled consist of “scarecrows” such as prisoners, “servingmen... revolted tapsters and ostlers trade-fallen.” While this provides comic relief from the preparations for battle, Falstaff’s sustained dishonesty contrasts with Prince Henry’s newfound sense of duty and honor. Falstaff is joined by the prince and Westmorland, who criticize his troops. Falstaff comments callously that they are good enough for cannon fodder, and Henry urges him to hurry: the king and Hotspur are already encamped and ready for battle.

## **ACT 4 SCENE 3**

The rebels argue over when to attack. A trumpet sounds a parley and Blunt brings a message from the king. Henry asks that the rebels “name [their] griefs,” promising to try to resolve matters and to pardon those who have stood against him. Hotspur launches into a long complaint, revealing the grievances of the Percy family against the king, detailing the help that they gave him in overthrowing Richard II and the king’s subsequent ingratitude, such as his refusal to ransom Mortimer. When Blunt offers to relay this, however, Hotspur shows unusual restraint, saying that Worcester will be sent “in the morning early” to talk with the king. He responds graciously to Blunt’s wish for a peaceful solution.

## **ACT 4 SCENE 4**

In a scene that foreshadows events in *Henry IV Part II*, the Archbishop of York sends letters to the Lord Marshal and Lord Scroop. He fears the outcome of a battle without Northumberland and Glendower’s forces and is strengthening his defenses in

readiness against the king, who is aware of his role in the conspiracy.

## **ACT 5 SCENE 1**

The pace of the previous act is sustained into Act 5, reinforcing the rapidity and confusion of the battle.

The king and prince discuss the worsening weather. Worcester is brought in and the king chastises him for deceiving his trust and bringing them to conflict. He gives Worcester the opportunity to “unknit / This churlish knot of all-abhorred war,” and Worcester responds that he is not the one responsible for the hostilities. He reiterates the complaints made by Hotspur in Act 4 Scene 3, concerning the “unkind usage” of the Percy family by the king. The king responds that this is merely an excuse with which to “face the garment of rebellion.” Prince Henry offers to meet Hotspur in single combat to settle the matter, in order to prevent lives being lost in battle. He acknowledges Hotspur’s bravery and nobility, and admits his own past failings as a “truant...to chivalry.” The king forbids this and again offers to pardon the rebels if they surrender now. Worcester goes to deliver this message, and the prince warns his father that the rebels will not accept his offer of peace. The king leaves to prepare. The prince and Falstaff say good-bye, and, once he is alone, Falstaff muses on the futility of honor if it leads to death, reasoning that “honour” is merely “a word.”

## **ACT 5 SCENE 2**

**Lines 1–42:** Worcester tells Vernon that Hotspur must not learn of the king’s offer. He argues that, while the king may forgive and forget Hotspur’s “trespass” as a youthful misdemeanor, he and Northumberland would be punished by Henry; thus selfishly placing his own concerns before the possibility of averting the war. Hotspur joins them and Worcester announces that the king will engage in

battle, dishonestly claiming that he “gently” told Henry of their “grievances” and that the king called them traitors.

**Lines 43–102:** Douglas returns from sending Westmorland to the king with a message of defiance and Worcester tells Hotspur that Prince Henry offered to meet him in single combat. Hotspur is pleased with this idea, echoing Henry’s honorable concern for the lives of his men. Vernon describes how Henry praised Hotspur and confessed his own “truant youth,” but Hotspur is unimpressed, expressing his intention to meet Henry on the battlefield. A messenger brings in letters, but Hotspur claims that “the time of life is short” and that he cannot read them now. Another Messenger announces that the king is approaching and Hotspur leads the rebels to battle.

**Lines 103–133:** Douglas and Blunt enter, Blunt disguised as the king. They fight and Blunt is killed. Hotspur arrives and recognizes Blunt, revealing that Henry has many decoys on the battlefield. They head back to battle.

**Lines 134–161:** Falstaff enters, alone, and sees Blunt’s body, remarking: “There’s honour for you!” Prince Henry finds him and demands his sword, chastising him for standing idle. Falstaff offers him a pistol, but the prince finds a bottle of wine in the holster. Disgusted, he leaves, and Falstaff reiterates his point that he would rather live than achieve honor in death.

### **ACT 5 SCENE 3**

**Lines 1–24:** The king urges an injured Prince Henry to withdraw, accompanied by Prince John, but they refuse. Prince John and



Westmorland return to the fight and the king and Prince Henry comment on John's bravery before the prince also returns to battle.

**Lines 25–58:** Douglas finds the king alone and, although uncertain whether it is another “counterfeit,” begins to fight him. The king is in danger of defeat when Prince Henry rejoins them, causing Douglas to flee. King Henry tells his son that he has “redeemed” his “lost opinion” before heading back into battle.

**Lines 59–111:** Hotspur arrives and the prince declares that one of the Harrys must die: “Two stars keep not their motion in one sphere.” As they fight, Falstaff arrives, followed by Douglas. They also fight and Falstaff collapses as if dead. As Douglas leaves, Henry kills Hotspur and eulogizes over his body, acknowledging his bravery. He sees Falstaff, apparently dead, and delivers an ambiguous but fond eulogy, promising to return for both bodies later.

**Lines 112–163:** In a moment of bathos after the tensions of the scene, Falstaff sits up, revealing that he faked his death to avoid being killed. He decides to claim that Hotspur regained consciousness and that he, Falstaff, killed him. He stabs the body and is interrupted by the two princes, to whom he tells his unlikely tale. Unconvinced, Henry tells Falstaff he will back him in his claims if it will do his friend “grace.” They leave as the retreat signals their victory over the rebels.

#### **ACT 5 SCENE 4**

The royal party enters, with Worcester and Vernon as prisoners. The king lays responsibility for the day's bloodshed on Worcester for not accepting his offer of peace, and condemns both rebels to death. Prince Henry reveals that he has Douglas prisoner and asks permission to release him in recognition of his bravery. The king

agrees and issues his instructions: Prince John and Westmorland are to lead forces against Northumberland and Scroop, while he and Prince Henry march to Wales to fight Glendower. Despite the victory, the play ends as it began: with the country in civil conflict.

## **SYNOPSIS OF *HENRY IV PART II***

In despair at the death of his son Hotspur, the Earl of Northumberland lends his support to a second rebellion, led by the Archbishop of York. As the threat of civil war looms over the country, King Henry IV grows sick, while also fearing that his son Prince Henry (known as Harry and, by Falstaff, as Hal) has returned to his old life with Falstaff and the other disreputable denizens of the Eastcheap tavern. Falstaff is sent on a recruiting expedition and renews old acquaintances in Gloucestershire. The rebel army is met by the King's forces, led this time by Hal's younger brother, Prince John of Lancaster. On his deathbed, King Henry is reconciled with his son, who has begun to distance himself from his former companions. A new, mature Hal accepts the crown as Henry V.

# ***HENRY IV IN PERFORMANCE: THE RSC AND BEYOND***

The best way to understand a Shakespeare play is to see it or ideally to participate in it. By examining a range of productions, we may gain a sense of the extraordinary variety of approaches and interpretations that are possible—a variety that gives Shakespeare his unique capacity to be reinvented and made “our contemporary” four centuries after his death.

We begin with a brief overview of the play’s theatrical and cinematic life, offering historical perspectives on how it has been performed. We then analyze in more detail a series of productions staged over the last half century by the Royal Shakespeare Company. The sense of dialogue between productions that can only occur when a company is dedicated to the revival and investigation of the Shakespeare canon over a long period, together with the uniquely comprehensive archival resource of promptbooks, program notes, reviews, and interviews held on behalf of the RSC at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, allows an “RSC stage history” to become a crucible in which the chemistry of the play can be explored.

We then go to the horse’s mouth. Modern theater is dominated by the figure of the director. He or she must hold together the whole play, whereas the actor must concentrate on his or her part. The director’s viewpoint is therefore especially valuable. Shakespeare’s plasticity is wonderfully revealed when we hear the directors of two highly successful productions answering the same questions in very

different ways. And finally, we offer the actor's perspective: a view of the play through the eyes of Prince Hal.

#### FOUR CENTURIES OF *HENRY IV*: AN OVERVIEW

*Henry IV Part I* was probably written and performed between 1596 and 1597 with *Part II* following a year later. The first performances of which records survive were at court in 1612–13 when a total of twenty plays were presented to celebrate the marriage of James I's daughter Elizabeth to Frederick, the Elector of Palatine. They are listed as *The Hotspurre* and *Sir John Falstaffe*, and were only later identified as the two parts of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. These alternative titles suggest that both were originally seen in terms of their star parts rather than as a political study of kingship with Prince Hal at the center. As scholars and theater historians have pointed out:

That change of emphasis required a change of format. It takes both parts of *Henry IV* followed by *Henry V* to make Prince Hal into a fully-fledged hero, or anti-hero, and it was not until the mid-twentieth century that an influential cycle of these plays...was staged in the English theatre.<sup>1</sup>

Until this point the plays were performed individually and, although *Part II* was clearly designed as a sequel to *Part I*—probably in order to capitalize on the enormous and immediate popularity of the first play—there is little evidence to suggest that they were performed in sequence. Numerous contemporary references and reprints of the Quarto editions all point to their popularity and success, however. The writer Nicholas Breton mentions seeing “the play of Ancient Pistol,”<sup>2</sup> and Leonard Digges' prefatory poem to the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's poems provides further evidence of their popularity:

...let but Falstaff come, Hal, Poins, the rest, you scarce  
shall have a room, All is so pestered...

In his commendatory poem to the Folio edition of Beaumont and Fletcher (1647), Sir Thomas Palmer claims he could “tell how long / Falstaff from cracking nuts have kept the throng.”

Falstaff was originally played either by company clown Will Kempe or comic actor Thomas Pope, while Prince Hal was almost certainly played by Richard Burbage, the leading tragedian with Shakespeare’s acting company, the Lord Chamberlain’s (later the King’s) Men. John Lowin took over the role of Falstaff: “before the Wars Lowin used to act, with mighty applause Falstaff.”<sup>3</sup> During the interregnum from 1642 to 1660, the theaters were technically closed, although various means were employed to get around the prohibition on plays, such as the introduction of music and dancing into sketches from popular plays known as drolls; a collection of twenty-seven of these, *The Wits, or Sport Upon Sport*, by Francis Kirkman, was published in 1662 with three featuring episodes from Shakespeare’s plays, including *The Bouncing Knight, or the Robbers Robbed*, centered on Falstaff’s exploits. The frontispiece illustration places Falstaff and the Hostess in prominent positions.

*Henry IV Part I* continued to be popular after the Restoration and was one of the first plays performed by Thomas Killigrew’s King’s Company in 1660. Samuel Pepys’ diary records his attendance at no fewer than four performances over the period 1660–68. The play’s main attractions were still Hotspur and Falstaff. Thomas Betterton, the great Restoration actor-manager, played Hotspur in 1682, with “wild impatient starts” and “fierce and flashing fire,”<sup>4</sup> but in the 1700 revival he took on the role of Falstaff. Thomas Davies records how “the versatility of Betterton’s genius was never more conspicuous than in his resigning the choleric Hotspur, in his declining years, and assuming the humour and gaiety of Falstaff, in which he is said to have been full as acceptable to the public as in the former.”<sup>5</sup> In contrast to most Shakespearean revivals in the period, it underwent relatively few changes apart from textual cuts of long political speeches, the Welsh dialogue and song, and much of the mock trial in the tavern. Betterton’s continued popularity as

Falstaff was largely responsible for a revival of *Part II* during the eighteenth century, in which the star turns were Falstaff and Justice Shallow.

In the next generation, James Quin, who had previously played Hotspur and the king, was the most notable Falstaff. David Garrick played Hotspur on five occasions, dressed “in a laced frock and a Ramilie wig,”<sup>6</sup> but was plainly unsuited to the role, and the part was taken over by Spranger Barry. One of the theatrical highlights seems to have been Falstaff carrying Hotspur offstage:

No joke ever raised such loud and repeated mirth, in the galleries, as Sir John’s labour in getting the body of Hotspur on his back...Quin had little or no difficulty in perching Garrick upon his shoulders, who looked like a dwarf on the back of a giant. But oh! how he tugged and toiled to raise Barry from the ground!<sup>7</sup>

His successor, John Henderson, reportedly had so much difficulty with his Hotspur that a small gang of “Falstaff’s ragamuffins” were used instead to bear the body offstage.<sup>8</sup> Other late eighteenth-century Falstaffs included at least one woman, Mrs. Webb, who “excelled in corpulent and grotesque characters” in Norwich in 1786.<sup>9</sup>

John Philip Kemble played Hotspur at Covent Garden in the early nineteenth century and his brother, Stephen, was one of a number of actors to play Falstaff without padding, although William Hazlitt remarked of his performance, “Every fat man cannot represent a great man.”<sup>10</sup> The American actor James Henry Hackett played the part in England and America for forty years, and his Hotspurs included John Philip and Charles Kemble, as well as Edmund Kean and William Charles Macready. He received mixed reviews; *The Athenaeum* reported:

His is the best Falstaff that has been seen for many a day,—which, however, is not saying much for it. But it has positive merits that deserve recognition. He did not...reach the full conception which Shakespeare has here embodied...but he aimed at it, and accomplished much; his soliloquy on honour, in particular, was well delivered, and, take him for all in all, we are disposed to give him a cordial welcome.<sup>11</sup>

His identification with the role was such that he became known as “Falstaff Hackett.”

In 1821 a spectacular production of *Henry IV Part II* with Macready as King Henry and Charles Kemble as Prince Hal included a magnificent staging of the coronation procession as a tribute to the coronation of George IV. Kemble’s production of *Part I* in 1824 with himself as Hotspur was mainly noted for the historical accuracy of costumes and sets, which included “the King’s Chamber in the old Palace of Westminster; the inn-yard at Rochester with the castle, by night; Hotspur’s Camp; a distant view of Coventry; and Shrewsbury from the field of battle.”<sup>12</sup> Samuel Phelps’ production at Sadler’s Wells in 1846 was similarly spectacular:

All has been done with a lavish and judicious hand, without a regard to cost or aught beside, save the desire of gratifying the public. The accoutrements, armour, and trappings worn by the several armies in the fourth and fifth acts are indeed splendid, and the minutest care has been shown in the arrangement of the costumes, even to the very crests of the different parties. The battle was admirably managed—the scenery was entirely new, and elicited much applause.<sup>13</sup>

The 1864 revival at Drury Lane which included the Glendower scene in full for the first time was distinguished by Phelps’ Falstaff:



“He lays stress not on Falstaff’s sensuality, but on the lively intellect that stands for soul as well as mind in his gross body,” in a performance marked by “a smooth delicate touch that stamps the knight distinctly as a man well born and bred.”<sup>14</sup> Phelps’ remarkable doubling of the king and Justice Shallow in *Part II* later that year earned further praise.<sup>15</sup>

Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s 1896 production at the Haymarket Theatre used a fuller text of the play and was well received by the critics, with the exception of George Bernard Shaw. William Archer praised the overall conception—“There has been no nearer approach in our day to the complete performance of a Shakespearian drama.”<sup>16</sup> Of Tree’s performance, *The Athenaeum* reported: “it is the fat knight himself that comes before us.”<sup>17</sup> Shaw, however, thought that “Mr Tree only wants one thing to make him an excellent Falstaff, and that is to get born over again as unlike himself as possible.”<sup>18</sup>

Victorian spectacle went out of fashion in the early twentieth century, influenced by the ideas of William Poel and the English Stage Society, which favored performances on a thrust stage with minimal scenery and faster-paced, fluid action.



1. Herbert Beerbohm Tree as Falstaff in his 1896 production at the Haymarket Theatre. *The Athenaeum* reported: “it is the fat knight himself that comes before us.”

History does not update in the same way as the comedies and tragedies that have lent themselves to a variety of settings, costumes, and periods. The effect on the history plays has been to emphasize their historicity. Between 1901 and 1906 Frank Benson staged a cycle of Shakespeare’s history plays for the first time at the Stratford-upon-Avon festival season which omitted *Henry IV Part I* but included *King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part II*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI Part II*, and *Richard III*. W. B. Yeats was impressed by the way in which “play supports play”<sup>19</sup> when presented in this way. *Henry IV*

*Part I* was included in the new cycle in 1905, as was Marlowe's *Edward II*. In 1921 Barry Jackson had staged both parts of *Henry IV* on the same day (23 April) in Birmingham. The two parts of *Henry IV* were the first plays performed after the opening of the New Memorial Theatre in Stratford by the Prince of Wales in 1932—*Part I* in the afternoon and *Part II* in the evening.

In 1935 Robert Atkins and Sydney Carroll staged a production of *Henry IV Part I* with the popular vaudeville comedian George Robey as Falstaff. Despite his lack of classical training many critics were impressed by his performance; Herbert Farjeon reflected that "We learn from Mr Robey's Falstaff many things. One of them is that it is a tremendous advantage to have Shakespeare's clowns...played by men who are funny *before they begin*...Mr Sydney Carroll's brilliant casting of Falstaff should put an end to the long dreary line of legitimate actors who have made soggy hay of Shakespeare's comics."<sup>20</sup> However, *The New Statesman* regarded Robey's Falstaff as an "old soak rather than the fallen gentleman...nothing more than a super-Bardolph."<sup>21</sup>

John Burrell's production a decade later at the New Theatre was warmly received:

*Felicitur audax* [pleasingly audacious] is, indeed, the phrase for Mr Burrell's production. Choosing not to adopt the uninterrupted flow of the Elizabethan method, he closes each scene with a moment of dumb-show, shadowy and significant. I shall never forget Glendower, standing at the window (the actor is Harcourt Williams, who knows how to stand)—standing and staring after Hotspur as he gallops away, with the two women weeping at his feet while we know what they guess, that they will never see Hotspur again.<sup>22</sup>

Harcourt Williams' performance was not the only one to be widely praised. Ralph Richardson's Falstaff was universally admired:

a grand buffoon and rascalion in *Part I*, proceeded in *Part II* to a still richer understanding which could catch the sombre illumination of "Do not bid me remember mine end" and suggest, as Falstaffs rarely do, the attraction of the man for the Prince as well as the considerable brain behind the wit. This was a metamorphosis assisted by make-up but by no means entirely dependent on it: for Richardson's greatness—and I think the word is justifiable—in the part was a greatness of spirit that transcended the mere hulk of flesh.<sup>23</sup>



2. Ralph Richardson as Falstaff and Laurence Olivier as Justice Shallow in John Burrell's 1945 New Theatre production: Ralph Richardson's Falstaff was universally admired, and Laurence Olivier triumphed as Hotspur in *Part I* and Justice Shallow in *Part II*.

Laurence Olivier, meanwhile, played Hotspur in *Part I* and Justice Shallow in *Part II*, and triumphed in both.

But it was the 1951 presentation of the tetralogy of *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part I*, *Henry IV Part II*, and *Henry V* by Anthony Quayle, John Kidd, and Michael Redgrave at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre which was to prove decisive in the plays' fortunes. Anthony Quayle explained the thinking behind the productions:

it seemed to us that the great epic theme of the Histories had become obscured through years of presenting the plays single, and many false interpretations had grown up, and come to be accepted, through star actors giving almost too persuasive and dominant performances of parts which the author intended to be by no means sympathetic.<sup>24</sup>



3. The 1951 Shakespeare Memorial Theatre presented *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part I* and *Part II*, and *Henry V* as a tetralogy: with Harry Andrews as Henry IV and Richard Burton as Hal.

One critic suggested: “One will never again think of these plays as single entities, and when they are played as such we shall feel them to have been lopped.”<sup>25</sup> Tanya Moiseiwitsch designed a single set of “plain unvarnished oak” which could be “embellished as the occasion demanded with props or with hangings” and “provided three acting spaces and a large variety of entrances; it allowed the action to move in an uninterrupted flow.”<sup>26</sup> There *were* star performances though—“Mr Redgrave’s poetic Richard and dazzling Hotspur, Mr Quayle’s splendidly rich Falstaff and Mr Richard Burton’s sultry intriguing Hal,” as well as “Mr Harry Andrews’s superb and masterly Bolingbroke”;<sup>27</sup> the balance was shifted decisively away from Hotspur and Falstaff toward Hal.

Douglas Seale directed both parts of *Henry IV* at the Old Vic in 1955 in productions admired for being “simple and direct and, while comparatively and mercifully static within each individual scene... they are driven with a brilliant sense of the narrative speed over all.”<sup>28</sup> Again, a strong cast achieved unanimous praise, from Paul Rogers’ Falstaff—“leaner and considerably dilapidated, is already some of the way downhill,” to Robert Hardy’s Prince—“a very strong and charming performance,” while “John Neville makes a fine Hotspur and a whirlwind Pistol, and Paul Daneman an ominous Worcester followed, in a miraculous transformation, by an extremely funny Shallow, withered with senility and malice. Rachel Roberts and Gwen Cherrell draw fruitfully on Hogarth for Mistress Quickly and Doll Tearsheet.”<sup>29</sup>

It has become the norm since then for the two plays of *Henry IV* to be performed together, often within the context of a larger cycle of Shakespeare’s history plays. The resources required for such ambitious projects are only realistically available to the national



subsidized companies, and productions by the RSC (discussed below) have constituted the majority of these. In 1986 Michael Bogdanov and Michael Pennington formed the English Shakespeare Company with the aim of promoting and presenting the works of Shakespeare both nationally and internationally. The inaugural production, *The Henrys*, consisted of *Part I* and *Part II* of *Henry IV* plus *Henry V*. The following year they presented *The Wars of the Roses*, comprising *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part I*, *Henry IV Part II*, *Henry V*, the three plays of *Henry VI* telescoped into two plays (*Henry VI: House of Lancaster*, *Henry VI: House of York*), and *Richard III*. The production toured successfully for two years, both within the UK and internationally. The company deliberately worked against the dominant mode of theatrical realism to present radical and exciting productions, designed to engage a modern audience:

We would provide a space that would allow the plays to range over the centuries in imagery. We would free our, and the audiences' imaginations by allowing an eclectic mix of costumes and props, choosing a time and a place that was most appropriate for a character or a scene. Modern dress at one moment, medieval, Victorian or Elizabethan the next. We would use a kit of props...[which], as far as possible, would remain on stage. The means of transformation from one scene to the next would remain visible. No tricks up our sleeves (until we needed one). We would create a style that was essentially rough theatre, but would add, when we needed it, a degree of sophistication.<sup>30</sup>

The relatively few American productions of *Henry IV* have concentrated historically on *Part I*, focusing on the roles of Hotspur and Falstaff. Stuart Vaughan directed both parts which played in repertory at New York's Phoenix Theater in 1960: the emphasis on Eric Berry's widely praised, compelling Falstaff led to the accusation that it "might accurately be called 'The Decline and Fall of Sir John

Falstaff, Fat Old Knight.”<sup>31</sup> In 1993, Ron Daniels directed back-to-back stagings of *Part I* and *Part II* for the American Repertory Theater, updated to an American Civil War setting which enjoyed a mixed critical reception:

Mr Daniels has created a wildly anachronistic, culturally mixed salad in which different elements of Shakespeare’s epic portrait are accorded theatrical analogues from wholly disparate historical moments. The result, given visual life by John Conklin’s time-traveling, slightly ragged scenic shorthand, is less disjunctive than one might expect.<sup>32</sup>

Barbara Gaines’ 1999 production of both plays at Chicago’s Shakespeare Repertory Theater was widely praised for its simple staging and strong performances. In 2003 Dakin Matthews conflated the texts of both plays in a production at Lincoln Center’s Vivian Beaumont Theater, directed by Jack O’Brien. The resulting adaptation lasted nearly four hours with two intervals, but compressed the action to create a fast-paced, fluid text. Kevin Kline played Falstaff.

...made up to resemble a threadbare Santa Claus with a blimp of a prosthetic belly and a snowy beard, Mr Kline looks like the most traditional Falstaff imaginable. The wonderful surprise is how he deviates from the convention of bluster and braggadocio. Mr Kline has never had more of a chance to make a meal of the scenery. Instead, he delivers a finely measured performance that matches the actor’s infinite resourcefulness with that of the character he plays.<sup>33</sup>

Remarkably, London’s National Theatre did not stage a performance of *Henry IV* until Nicholas Hytner’s production in 2005 played on a “roughly arrow-shaped stage” in the large Olivier



Theatre. The production managed “to suggest the mighty sweep of the plays—their oscillation from uptight court to frowsty lowlife, from the frenetically urban to the peacefully pastoral, from the battlefield to the boozier—with depth and definition.”<sup>34</sup> Michael Gambon was praised for the way he:

wonderfully incorporates the contradictions of Falstaff. He looks like the kind of wily, drunken bohemian tramp that Just William would ill-advisedly let into the Brown household, where he would later be found comatose in the wine cellar. In the moveable feast of his accent, you hear the tones of a parvenu whose poshness is pretty precarious and inclined to slip into saloon-bar bravado. This is not a sentimentalised fat knight. He’s utterly out for himself, and the last thing we’re treated to in *Part 1* is the sight of him shamelessly robbing two venerable corpses.<sup>35</sup>

Matthew McFadyen made a “shrewd witty prince,” and David Bradley played the “haunted cadaverous king,” while:

The scenes in Gloucestershire are delectably comic, thanks to the great John Wood, whose Justice Shallow is a transcendent study in florid, nervously energetic self-delusion about a wild youth that he did not experience. He is delightfully partnered by Adrian Scarborough, who, as Silence, is like a little slip of death inadequately warmed up—until he gets a few glasses inside him, when he cannot be restrained from providing quavering, unwanted cabaret.<sup>36</sup>

The two parts of *Henry IV* with their broad cross section of scenes and characters have come to be regarded as a sort of national epic firmly established at the heart of the Shakespearean repertory. The most remarkable film version is Orson Welles’ 1966 film adaptation,

*Chimes at Midnight*, in which the entire tetralogy from *Richard II* to *Henry V* is telescoped into less than two hours. In 1938 Welles directed an unsuccessful play called *Five Kings* in which he had gathered all the Falstaff material from the *Henrys* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. This formed the basis of Welles' film, shot while he was supposedly making *Treasure Island*. As Scott McMillin suggests, "he was not interested in the historical epic formed by the histories; he was interested in Falstaff—or, perhaps more accurately, in a certain angle of vision which he thought of as Falstaffian."<sup>37</sup> The star-studded cast included Jeanne Moreau, Margaret Rutherford, John Gielgud (as Henry IV), with Ralph Richardson as the narrator. The film's "brilliance" lies in Welles' characteristically bravura film vocabulary and style. As McMillin puts it: "If Falstaff had made films, he would have made something like this one."<sup>38</sup>

The BBC Shakespeare version, by contrast, offers a conventional historical cycle of the second tetralogy (*Richard II*, *Henry IV Part I*, *Henry IV Part II*, *Henry V*) made for television and directed by David Giles. Anthony Quayle, who had played Falstaff so successfully in 1951, reprised the role. The narrow focus of television does not, however, lend itself easily to the broad sweep of history:

If cycle-thinking puts the realm and its rulers ahead of Falstaff, and if the performance of Falstaff puts him well ahead of the realm and its rulers, trouble is brewing. Quayle's assured performance as Falstaff is the strongest element of the production, and the separate "sphere of intelligence" provided by his addresses to the audience happily interrupts the dutiful effort to capture history in the space of the television studio. He is in better control of the medium—and this makes Prince Hal's efforts to take better control of the kingdom seem second-rate.<sup>39</sup>

The English Shakespeare Company's highly politicized, eclectic *Wars of the Roses* was recorded for television in 1989.

## AT THE RSC

The stage is the world, as in a mediaeval morality play. It may represent court, camp, tavern, England, France, but it is always the blank slate on which life writes its lessons for [Hal], the bare, mental arena in which the soul of a royal Everyman discovers his destiny and true friends.

(Ronald Bryden)<sup>40</sup>

In mid-twentieth-century postwar Britain, Hal took center stage in productions of *Henry IV Part I*. Caught between the mighty figures of Henry IV and Falstaff and the worlds of court and tavern, his education became the focal point of the play. Directors instilled an ambiguity into the proceedings, with Hal never truly revealing his nature but remaining enigmatic, and therefore slightly dangerous and antiheroic. An adolescent under the sway of two highly charismatic father figures, manipulative and aware of the power he wields, critics and audiences have often found him a difficult character to like. Sympathy for Hal derives mainly from the portrayal of Henry IV and Falstaff. The prince attempts to learn from two men who are not what they seem to be; who present one face to the world and another to themselves. He inhabits two worlds, different in their emotional propensities and ethos, but equal in their duplicity.

When looking at RSC productions, the resulting influence of these environments on Hal can be seen reflected in the design concept chosen by directors. Pointing to an overarching theme, court and tavern were either designed as stylistically opposed or inextricably linked. With *Henry IV Part I* rarely performed on its own, the design of a production will often be part of a larger scheme, involving *Henry IV Part II*, *Richard II*, and/or *Henry V*. Occasionally, they have been performed as part of the cycle of Shakespeare's histories (produced in 1963–65, 2000–01, and 2006–08), chronologically

following through and encompassing the eight plays from *Richard II* to *Richard III*.

In 1964 *Henry IV Part I* and *Part II* were performed as part of a seven-play history cycle called *The Wars of the Roses* that examined the politics, the mechanics of power that moved behind Shakespeare's history plays. These:

were bleakly anti-heroic, capable of making war seem devastating and inhuman. The younger theatregoers of 1963 did not share the end-of-war patriotism that had motivated the... 1951 Stratford series for the Festival of Britain. The sensibilities of the new audience were being shaped by Beckett, Osborne, Pinter, Brecht. This was not a crowd given to what they would have regarded as the sentiment and jingoism of the past... Peter Hall saw the dominant image as a mechanism of power:

Over the years I became more and more fascinated by the contortions of politicians and by the corrupting seductions experienced by anyone who wields power...I realised that the mechanism of power had not changed in centuries.

...[Designer, John] Bury saw the violence and power politics of the cycle as framed in steel:

It was a period of armour and a period of the sword: they were plays about warfare, about power, about danger. One spent one's time either in armour, or piercing someone's armour—or being pierced...We were trying to make a world: a dangerous world, a terrible

world, in which all these happenings  
fit.<sup>41</sup>

The hard and heavy oppressive nature of the set complemented a darkly political reading of the play. The fragility of the characters and the dehumanizing effect of war were also reflected in the costumes, which assimilated the metal world:

The stage floor was plated steel. The acting space for all seven plays was defined by two huge triangle-based metal-plated walls, which could be turned to present different faces and shifted to form different angles... [For *Henry IV*] the dominant metallic textures were modified here and there by wood and cloth, and banners were used in the battle scenes, but austerity prevailed in the overall visual impression.<sup>42</sup>

When Bury joined the RSC in 1962, he brought with him a revolutionary concept—that a production's design should be based around a central "image" which should be followed on in the costuming and sound of that production. He altered the use of stage space by using real materials that had texture, substance, and a natural sound when the actors worked on them. His style was a rejection of the romantic designs and costumes frequently seen in the 1950s.

As in so many of Shakespeare's plays, the physical and mental condition of the king is reflected in his state. The ill health of the "body politic" was clearly visible in John Napier's design for the 1982 production. Picking up on the idea that "We are all diseased," director Trevor Nunn

contrived to suggest that a whole range of minor figures suffered from the general malaise...[The] set consisted of four tall wooden structures, each built like the open-section interior of a three-storey square

house...each structure could be moved separately backwards or forwards, to build a different “house” for each location. Often the structures were full of people, even as they were moved into place, particularly with the tavern-scenes, which became momentarily large portable pubs. At times, the scene practically seethed with extras, working hoists, trundling kegs, mounting ladders to paint signs, bustling about with sacks or trays of drinks, beating carpets, making beds...these sets remained drab. The boards were twisted. They were hung with shields and lances, but all were painted black—the colour of the wood itself—and the dark heavy structures seemed gloomy and overpowering. The effect was enhanced by David Hersey’s lighting: often a dim suffused light; at other times a bright overhead spotlight, leaving dingy shadows all around. In addition, Eastcheap extras often remained on the set, lounging up stairs, watching, during the intervening court scenes. The effect was to suggest a political world which was haunted by shabbiness.<sup>43</sup>

In keeping with the idea that *Henry IV* takes its form from the medieval morality play, Adrian Noble’s designer, Bob Crowley, strongly marked out the symbolism of faith and sin, heaven and hell, in the set design in 1991. He “sharply juxtaposed the excesses of the tavern with the calculation of the court”:<sup>44</sup>

Julian Glover’s King Henry and Robert Stephens’s Falstaff form the opposing poles of Adrian Noble’s production of *Henry IV Part 1*, the King stern, cold and authoritarian in grey and black, Falstaff warm, mercurial, libertarian, and faintly epicene in scarlet... The King’s bare court is furnished with hard chairs and severe tables; while soft fabrics and yielding sofas in

glowing shades of red characterise the tavern scenes. The Eastcheap tavern erupts on us like a mediaeval vision of hell, a lurid maze of private rooms with sex visibly on sale.<sup>45</sup>

We could hardly be reminded more forcibly that Shakespeare's matchless history has its roots in mediaeval drama or that Hal is poised between an angry God in Henry and a ribald Satan in Falstaff.<sup>46</sup>

Meanwhile, the greed, the violence, the humble bustle, the sordid pastimes of ordinary English life go on. Shakespeare's greatness is at its most awesome when he shows you how the politics of the nobility is mirrored, refracted, parodied and complemented by the goings on in Eastcheap and Rochester. Noble has retained Act Two Scene One, in the inn at Rochester, which directors usually cut. Here the robbery is set up when Shakespeare's equivalent of the hotel manager tips off Gadshill as to which guests are carrying the loot. The underworld types are played without a touch of mockery. These are dangerous but ordinary people who have a living to make, and their lives are no laughing matter any more than the Percys'.<sup>47</sup>

When explaining his entrance as Falstaff, Desmond Barrit explained the idea for the design of *Henry IV* in 2000:

Up through the floor I pushed, by way of a sort of rubber flange that we came to know as the sphincter... The idea of this curious entrance, of course, was symbolic: our production was part of the RSC's "This England" project to present eight of Shakespeare's history plays, and the subject of those plays was this island, this England, this earth that we live on, and the

director wanted Falstaff, as a man of the earth, to be seen to be born from the earth.<sup>48</sup>

In contrast to the history cycle of 1964, no design concept linked the plays. Each was individually conceived by separate directors and designers. This was criticized by some who felt that the continuity of the cycle was less apparent, and confusing, when the same actors in the same roles appeared in completely different times and settings. However, Es Devlin's set design for the two parts of Michael Attenborough's production of *Henry IV* was completely appropriate to the play: "England is basically conceived as an often blood-stained, earthy battleground, with a steep hill at the rear, [conveying] Attenborough's sense that the play intensifies the impression...of a country rent asunder."<sup>49</sup> With lights shining up through the floor, the earth appeared primordial and volcanic, as if awaiting a moment of violence. With "its mound of smoke-filled peat [the set] effectively embodies the idea that "the land is burning."<sup>50</sup>

## Fathers and Sons

What the father hath hid cometh out in the son; and  
oft have I found in the son the father's revealed secret.

(Friedrich Nietzsche)<sup>51</sup>

As Harold C. Goddard points out, it would be hard to find a better illustration of this axiom than Henry IV and Hal: "In his concentration on power the elder Henry has suppressed both the playful and the passionate tendencies of his nature...What he has kept under comes out in Hal, who leads a life of abandon under the tutelage of Falstaff."<sup>52</sup> Hal finds in Falstaff a father who embodies the "unrealised half of [Henry's] soul,"<sup>53</sup> providing him with a rough education and emotional warmth.



Of the 1975 production, directed by Terry Hands, John Elsom wrote:

Alan Howard's Hal is a young prince, growing up. His mind is being formed by two mutually opposing fathers. His natural father, the King, is tortured by guilt and obsessed with ideals of kingship. His debased "father," Falstaff is impervious to guilt, scornful of honour and duty, but relishes the simple pleasures in life, sack, sex and getting away with things.<sup>54</sup>

Hands' production focused on this central relationship, providing "a study in domestic psychopathology, probing the tortured relationship of father and son."<sup>55</sup>

Emrys James, who played Henry IV, portrayed him as a lonely character frustrated by his inability to express emotion in a non-aggressive fashion:

The play is about the longing a father has for a relationship with his son. It is peculiarly painful to have that figure high above, cut off from his son, but watching. He is a distant father-figure for Hal because this man doesn't, cannot unbend...

Stay, and breathe awhile.  
Thou hast redeemed thy lost opinion,  
And showed thou mak'st some tender of my life,  
In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.



4. Alan Howard as Prince Hal, “a young prince growing up,” and Brewster Mason as Falstaff, who “relishes the simple pleasures in life, sack, sex and getting away with things,” in Terry Hands’ 1975 RSC production.

It’s incredible that he is not able to say, “You are a wonderful son to me because you have given yourself in battle with this great beast of a man and fought him off. And it shows without question that you love me.” That’s not the way he thinks. It’s part of his hang-up, part of his trouble. If he had shown emotion to this emotional young man their relationship would have been that much easier.

...It isn’t accidental that Shakespeare left his wife out of the play. He’s a lonely man surrounded by four big, surly, rebellious sons, whom he rules with a rod of iron...Here’s a man who hasn’t learned how to handle his emotions and his solution to the problem is to suppress them completely. Except in moments of extreme stress. Then they come out.<sup>56</sup>

In order to emphasize the relationship between father and son, Hands deliberately merged Eastcheap and the court, with Henry and

Hal often present, onlookers in their separate scenes:

Here both king and prince stray into scenes from which they are usually absent. From the first, Henry IV watches, soft-lit and chorus-like, from the back of the stage as Hal and Falstaff flirt—almost literally flirt—with self-indulgence. From his dallying, Hal strolls off, seeing Henry lambaste the nobles who will turn against him, removed from his father yet linked as he circles the stage.<sup>57</sup>

Props were also used to signify Hal's half existence between two worlds:

James's Henry treats Hal as a child, takes his hand, pulls him onto the seat...beside him, hugs him, kisses him. He tries to supplant the physical affection evident between Hal and Sir John but the boy is only disorientated and reaches out of the scene to take a bottle and goblet from the tavern in which their palace meeting is limboed.<sup>58</sup>

The deliberate merging of court and tavern also prompts us to think of Henry IV and Falstaff as the lords of two realms within England. The device was used to great effect in Michael Attenborough's production in 2000:

Bolingbroke, now Henry IV, sits on the same throne that serves as Falstaff's perch in downtown Eastcheap. This neatly indicates that the king and the old reprobate serve as competing father figures to Prince Hal.<sup>59</sup>

How the actors physically relate to each other reveals their character and the dimension of their relationships. Of the 1964 production, Scott McMillin observed that

Falstaff offered what Hal ought to have sought according to a psychological reading, a little fatherly contact. Hal's own father, the Henry IV of Eric Porter, was remote and unapproachable, but Falstaff showed warm feeling and caressed Hal's face while acting the father's role. [Ian] Holm did not spurn such gestures.<sup>60</sup>

Holm played Hal in an antiheroic fashion, as an onlooker, never completely engaged or in contact with the people around him, "a cold-blooded young man who was working his way toward heroism":

in the vital matter of [Henry's] relationship with Hal there seemed not even the contact of pity between father and son. Their meeting...was played with great physical and emotional distance between the two men. When the time came for Hal (Ian Holm) to declare his loyalty, he first went over and closed the door: a telling gesture with its suggestion of guarded secrecy. He remained inaccessible to his father.<sup>61</sup>

In Adrian Noble's 1990 production:

Caught between King and clown is Michael Maloney's slightly built Hal, initially an emotionally dependent adolescent. His relationship with Falstaff is intense: they hold hands affectionately in the opening scene; as the boy taunts Falstaff after the exposure of his cowardice, Falstaff kisses him on the lips on "no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me." And Robert Stephens'...agile Falstaff is dependent on Hal too. There is introspection behind this bluff exterior; the spaniel eyes seek affection...Hal's determination to conquer Hotspur is motivated by the need to demonstrate his maturity to his father; the thwarted

love behind it seems about to resolve itself with a kiss from son to father when the King [Julian Glover] holds Hal at arm's length.<sup>62</sup>

David Troughton, who played Henry in 2000, believed, like Emrys James, that Henry is aware of his failure as a father and attempts to redress this in order to win back his son: “with his own son he has no idea how to behave at all. Hal’s search for an alternative father is a cry for help, because his own father wants him for only one thing: to be his successor.”<sup>63</sup> Unable to be demonstrative in his love, Henry’s attempts at a bond between father and son are thwarted by awkward moments of unwanted physicality. Unlike Glover’s Henry, who chose to remain distant, Troughton’s actively sought to embrace his son when the opportunity arose:

It takes just one speech from Hal to bring them together—metaphorically, anyway, for though I used to put out my arms to him here, he never noticed, and no embrace was achieved. Perhaps Hal doesn’t want to notice, or perhaps he simply doesn’t see; that ambiguity was important in our production, and I think right. It’s like one of those moments when you go to kiss your father—and it turns confusedly into shaking hands. Hal has said that he’s sorry; he has said that he will fight along-side his father; but there has been no expression of love of son to father, which is what Henry misses. But whether Henry could achieve the embrace, even if Hal were looking, remains a question. He simply doesn’t know how to touch his son properly. So I just used to give him a little push on his shoulder with my fist, and the awkward moment passed.<sup>64</sup>

Troughton thought *Part I* “brilliantly written in its exploration of all the tactics that we use as parents: anger, loving kindness, emotional

blackmail, they're all there." The character of Hotspur was key in this production as a means for Henry to get to his son: "he betrays his weird fixation on Hotspur, that son who is the 'theme of honour's tongue'...who is so good to his father, such a great soldier."<sup>65</sup> It is clear that this is the son that Henry would wish for, and that Hal, played by William Houston, was made aware of it.

The parental battle between Falstaff and Henry for Hal never comes to a climactic moment when the two characters meet and argue over his emotional and moral education. In 1982 Trevor Nunn contrived

a moment in which Hal finds himself between his father and Falstaff, with Bolingbroke's look of envious contempt at Sir John and silent appeal for his son's affections answered by Hal's following his friend's insistent call: "Hal, if thou seest me down in the battle..." The king turns away, apparently defeated, an interesting explanation for what in the text is the curious continuation of the estrangement of Hal and his father in *Part 2* in spite of the outcome of the battle. Not until he sees his father dying is this Hal ready to demonstrate any emotional commitment to him.<sup>66</sup>

Similarly, in 2001, "Troughton also gives us the anxious father aware that he is in danger of losing his son to the taverns and the fat knight: there's a great moment when his path crosses that of Falstaff in battle and he shoots him a wounded look."<sup>67</sup> David Troughton recalled how this moment was realized:

[Henry and Falstaff]...were symbolically present on stage together for a few moments between the first and second scenes of *Part One*...We created a brief moment in our production—after I had rejected (for fear of losing my heir) Hal's offer to take on Hotspur in single

combat and as we were all girding up for battle—when I look at him and Falstaff together and thought “O, God, I don’t want them meeting any more.”<sup>68</sup>

## Kingship

Renaissance philosophy believed that the best man was the “fullest” man, the one with the widest experience of the world. Behind this lay the mediaeval theory of elements and humours, whose balance and combination was the key to mastery of oneself and others. A king should not only know the life of his subjects. He should contain in himself an equilibrium of all human passions—anger, pride, melancholy, mercy and love...The best education is the world itself, and the best introduction to the elements of one’s own nature is other people.

(Ronald Bryden)<sup>69</sup>

*Henry IV Part I* posits many questions as to the nature of kingship. Shakespeare examines the political theory of the divine right of kings through Henry’s gnawing guilt, which stems from a belief that he has sinned against God in the usurpation and murder of Richard II. Regardless of the fact that he believed himself the right man for the job, Henry cannot escape the belief that he is a counterfeit king: “Confirming a change that had long been in incubation, on the day when Henry deposed Richard he became a double man, one thing to the world, another to his own conscience.”<sup>70</sup>

Emrys James played Henry in 1975 as the most unregal of men. Erratic in behavior, he was a self-made man, an administrator and clerk, a cunning politician who made his way to kingship when, as Falstaff said (ostensibly of Worcester), “Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it”:

He wants to assert his authority again and again, because kingship doesn't come naturally to him... Richard could go through crowds as a golden figure, and you could never ever conceive of Henry IV as a golden figure. Here is an executive, an executive of the state, angrily aware that the kind of chief executive he is is better for the state than the preening vision of majesty that Richard II presents.<sup>71</sup>

In David Troughton's highly acclaimed performance in 2000, he embodied the idea of Henry as a man racked by inner conflict, caught between faith and the necessities of power:

A dominant Bolingbroke, he now turns into a guilt-wracked Henry IV, ever conscious that he seized the throne by force. Yet, although first seen at prayer in penitent's gown, Troughton's king is still a brutal pragmatist who seeks to pre-empt rebellion by squashing his fractious nobles.<sup>72</sup>

The opening is heavy with brooding anger, even melancholy...Power may be coveted; you may cheat, lie, manipulate, even kill for it; but when it is yours it can become a burden, a prison of responsibility... [Troughton's] huge body suggests both brute force and vulnerability. The king is not at ease with himself... loyalties come at a heavy price. And over all this hangs Henry's guilt about the murder of his predecessor, the deposed Richard.<sup>73</sup>





5. David Troughton as King Henry IV “believes himself cursed by his sin of regicide” in Michael Attenborough’s 2000 RSC production.

Having achieved power he believes himself cursed by his sin of regicide. If the king is God’s emissary on earth, to kill the king is an act against God:

Once he gets the crown, things start to go wrong politically and personally. The guilt has started to eat away at him; it’s as though the year that elapses between the plays has hugely changed him. The fulfilment of that one aim of getting the crown was one thing; keeping it is quite another, for once you’ve got it, the only thing to do with it is to stop anyone else getting it.<sup>74</sup>

In a very different reading of the part, Julian Glover’s Henry in *Part I* “was neither infirm nor tired, as so often he has been played, but firmly in control of the political world”.<sup>75</sup>

When Glover is present there is no doubt where the power lies, and the daring and monstrosity of the

challenge against him is palpable. There is a strong sense of personal ambition and vanity in these confrontations, but essentially they are about political power: great impersonal imperatives which command a man's will and demand his self-sacrifice.<sup>76</sup>

Until struck down with a heart spasm in his moment of victory, he plays with undiminished power throughout: curtly disdainful to Owen Teale's hulking Hotspur, releasing thunderbolts of majestic wrath against Hal, and a match for Angus Wright's fire-breathing Douglas on the battlefield.<sup>77</sup>

[Julian Glover] is like some stern, unforgiving Old Testament patriarch who provokes rebellion by his curt dismissal of the Percys and who alienates his son by treating him as a recalcitrant hooligan. It is a marvellous portrait of a frosty spirit incapable of warmth.<sup>78</sup>

The qualities of kingship are constantly discussed or displayed by various characters in the play, as if Shakespeare were asking us, *What makes a king?* The influence of Falstaff, Hotspur, and Henry offers Hal life's alternatives from which he must choose and discard in his preparation for the throne.

Hotspur so impresses his elders because he embodies the idea of chivalric honor, an exalted view of warfare and armed conflict that is tried and tested on the battlefield. Combining the qualities of military skill and political power, matched with a single-minded determination to promote the rebels' cause, Hotspur drives much of the main plot and is admired by all, despite his occasional outbursts. Although historically older than Hal, Shakespeare makes him a peer to establish a direct rivalry between the two men, especially in Henry's conception of the ideal son. If, as Montaigne suggests, "The reputation and worth of a man consisteth in his heart and will;

therein lies true honour”<sup>79</sup> rather than in martial prowess, we can see that Hotspur and Hal are on opposite sides of this maxim. Contrary to Hal, in Hotspur’s attractive arrogance we can see the essence of an unbending spirit, especially in the scene with his wife.

In 1964, Roy Dotrice’s Hotspur, although capturing his usual inextinguishable humor and vitality, in the words of the *Times*’ reviewer, had “the mentality of an amiable psychopath.”<sup>80</sup> The scene with Lady Percy took the form of rough foreplay, with “husband and wife pushing over, kissing, tumbling, wrapping-up, kneeling astride or lying on top.”<sup>81</sup> In this very antiheroic production, Hotspur’s death was in keeping with Dotrice’s interpretation and the mood of the production. At war with Hal, he was in his element. Flying at him with a huge sword, laughing aloud, Hotspur’s sword jammed into the side of a horse trough, Hal got in quickly to stab him under the ribs. “Hotspur’s...violent death-throes...robbed his death of the last shred of heroic dignity.”<sup>82</sup> “Lowering him, dying, into the trough Hal delivered his line ‘For worms, brave Percy’ [5.3.88]. Now he was dead; and curiously, the man who remained alive seemed to have no zest for life at all.”<sup>83</sup>

In 1982, Timothy Dalton’s Hotspur emerged

not as a contrast but as a parallel. The warm-hearted side of him was played down, and replaced by moodiness. Many of his more “poetic” lines were cut. His impulsiveness was much like Hal’s own. In the first scene with his wife, he knelt, reading, as his wife came creeping downstairs. Played by Harriet Walter as a very submissive lady, she crouched beside him. The two figures became, suddenly, two people talking about their marriage. They looked grim and lugubrious. Hotspur jumped up, to call for his horse. Lady Percy followed, attempting playfully to wheedle his secrets out of him. Quite suddenly he turned on her. The line, “Away, you trifler” was delivered with

ferocious force. When he said, “I care not for thee, Kate,” there was no doubt that he meant it. If at the end he relented, holding out a hand to her which eventually she took, the patching-up of their marriage was only temporary.<sup>84</sup>

Honor at the expense of the personal, or personal life at the expense of honor? Is there any way that a man in power can maintain a life of duty and keep intact his humanity? Key to Hal’s education, and a central concern of Shakespeare’s in many plays, is this understanding of “honour.” On discussing his portrayal of Falstaff in 2000, Desmond Barrit pointed to this questioning nature of the play in his performance of the famous soliloquy:

I used to play the “honour” soliloquy as a sort of dialogue with the audience, with them asking the questions: “Can honour set to a leg?,” and Falstaff replies “No”; “Or an arm?,” and Falstaff replies “No”; “Or take away the grief of a wound?,” and again he replies “No” [5.1.131–3]. Falstaff is placing himself, I think, as an intermediary between the war and the audience, forcing them to wonder why men go to war at all, asking, and answering, the questions that are in their minds.<sup>85</sup>

The effectiveness of this delivery was picked up on by most reviewers, and was an appropriately serious reading for the end of the twentieth century: “His beautiful delivery of the famous ‘honour’ speech here becomes a totally persuasive indictment of the hallow, macho posturing of war.”<sup>86</sup>

The question as to whether Hal truly learns the lessons offered by both court and tavern is best discussed in the representation of the prince in *Henry IV Part II*: “Hal must learn to exercise authority with integrity. In *Part I*, this is the path Hal successfully finds for himself, on the way losing nothing in his admiration for Hotspur’s shining

example and learning something of the warmth of humanity from Falstaff and his cronies.”<sup>87</sup>

Despite the upbeat nature of the ending of *Part I*, productions often suggest a certain ambiguity as to Hal’s assumption of kingly behavior. What has he learned from these diverse parental figures that will make him a better king? The various workings of the father–son relationship demonstrate the battle in Hal to find a true path to kingship. Hal proves, as he said he would in the “I know you all” speech (1.2.175–97), his abilities to his father and the officials of the court. However, his education is at an early stage. For Shakespeare, honor and integrity do not come from wielding a sword, and Hal has his most difficult of battles yet to face. Only when fathers are lost and cast aside will we see the emergence of the man who will be king.

#### **THE ACTOR’S VOICE AND THE DIRECTOR’S CUT: INTERVIEWS WITH MICHAEL PENNINGTON, ADRIAN NOBLE, AND MICHAEL BOYD**

**Michael Pennington**, born in 1943, was brought up in London and read English at Cambridge University. While at university he appeared with the National Youth Theatre. He went on to join the RSC, playing small parts in *The Wars of the Roses* directed by Peter Hall (1964). He has since returned to the RSC on many occasions, playing Angelo in *Measure for Measure* (1974), Edgar in *King Lear* (1976), Berowne in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (1978), Hamlet (1980), and Timon in *Timon of Athens* (2000). He has numerous radio and television parts to his credit, as well as film roles. He has written books on acting Shakespeare and Chekhov. In 1986 he and Michael Bogdanov founded the English Shakespeare Company (ESC), dedicated to taking Shakespeare to new audiences. Their inaugural production, *The Henrys*, comprising the two parts of *Henry IV* plus *Henry V*, in which he played Prince Hal/King Henry V, was enormously successful. *Richard II*, the three *Henry VI* plays, and *Richard III* were subsequently added, and their *Wars of the Roses*

toured the world to great acclaim. He launched his one-man show, *Sweet William*, about Shakespeare's life and writing and his own relationship with those works, in 2006. He talks here both about playing the part of Hal and about wider aspects of the ESC staging of the two parts.

**Adrian Noble**, born in 1950, arrived at the RSC from the Bristol Old Vic, where he had directed several future stars in productions of classic plays. His first production on the main stage of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford was the acclaimed 1982 *King Lear*. Two years later, his *Henry V* sowed the seed for Kenneth Branagh's film. Among his other major productions during his two decades at the RSC were *Hamlet*, again with Branagh in the title role; *The Plantagenets*, based on the *Henry VI/Richard III* tetralogy, and the two parts of *Henry IV*. Noble's 1994 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was made into a film. He was artistic director from 1991 to 2003, since when he has been a freelance director. His production style is characterized by strong use of colors and objects (such as umbrellas), and fluid scenic structure. He talks here about his 1991 production with Robert Stephens as Falstaff, making reference to both *Part I* and *Part II* of *Henry IV*.

**Michael Boyd** was born in Belfast in 1955, educated in London and Edinburgh, and completed his MA in English literature at Edinburgh University. He trained as a director at the Malaya Bronnaya Theater in Moscow. He then went on to work at the Belgrade Theater in Coventry, joining the Sheffield Crucible as associate director in 1982. In 1985 Boyd became founding artistic director of the Tron Theater in Glasgow, becoming equally acclaimed for staging new writing and innovative productions of the classics. He was drama director of the New Beginnings Festival of Soviet Arts in Glasgow in 1999. He joined the RSC as an associate director in 1996 and has since directed numerous productions of Shakespeare's plays. He won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Director for his version of the *Henry VI* plays in the RSC's *This England: The Histories* in 2001. He took over as artistic director of the RSC in 2003 and oversaw the extraordinarily successful

Complete Works Festival in 2006–07. He followed this up with a cycle of all eight history plays, from *Richard II* through to *Richard III*, with the same company of actors. This transferred to London's Roundhouse Theatre in 2008 and won multiple awards. He talks here about both parts of *Henry IV*.

**These plays can be thought of as individual works, as parts of a pair, or of a tetralogy, or even of a longer cycle of English history plays. There are cross-references across the two parts, back to *Richard II* and forward to *Henry V*. Some audience members know the backstory and the forward-story, some don't. How do you cope with all this?**

**MP:** Each of the history plays has to stand alone—that's how Shakespeare planned them—but it's almost as if he had an idea that they might one day be seen in sequence, as they often are now, because each generally "trails" the next episode of the story at its end. So *Part II* closes by looking forward to Henry V's French campaign, and indeed the end of *Henry V* to the reign of Henry VI. With the *Henry IV*s it doesn't really matter if the audience doesn't know *Henry V* since it's in the future, except as general interest as to how Henry V became Henry V. The backstory of *Richard II* is more of a problem: you need to know about the shakiness of Henry IV's claim to the throne and his own conscience—if he has any—about having usurped. The only real answer is to make sure the actors make the audience truly listen to Hotspur's argument against Henry in *Part I* and what the king himself says, so that they miss none of it. It's a matter of emphasis in the acting, of determination to get it across.

**AN:** In two ways. First of all, one has to start with the very simple premise that people are buying a ticket for one show, therefore it has to stand alone. But from the point of view of the acting company and as somebody involved at the RSC with the history

plays for quite some time, it's very hard not to appreciate the wider context, going back to the *Henry VI* plays. It seems to me impossible that Shakespeare did not have an architectural form in his head as he wrote them. The *Henry VI/Richard III* tetralogy was the first time since Sophocles and Euripides that someone had attempted a cycle of interrelated plays for the secular stage. It hadn't happened for two thousand years. Writing it as a man in his mid-to-late twenties, I cannot believe Shakespeare wasn't conscious of that. And of course they were enormously successful, so slightly later in his career, when his gaze cast upon the *Henry IV* plays, I think he must again have had some sort of ghost of the architecture in his mind all the time. But because the first tetralogy tackled events that chronologically took place after those of the second, you get a very strong sense of moving forward toward anarchy and chaos. If you look at all eight, you start with the formality of *Richard II* and end up with the butchery of *Richard III*. It's a divine untidiness. In the second tetralogy you can see the architecture but also a maturity of construction and a depth of characterization within each play, which makes them highly satisfactory as individual plays.

**MB:** We conceived our *Henry IV*s as part of an eight-play cycle of Shakespeare's history plays, and a large proportion of our audience saw them in this context. Clive Wood had not only played Bullingbrook in *Richard II* but, as Richard of York, had spent three plays trying to take the crown from Henry VI and failing. We staged the plays initially in the order of their writing so York was seen on a Sisyphean journey toward the crown, which faltered in *Henry VI Part III* and began again with renewed vigor and sophistication in *Richard III*. The *Henry IV* plays revealed the eventual fruits of his labors as bitter.

Shakespeare had five very successful histories behind him as he wrote the *Henry IV*s, and *Henry V* was a popular title long before Shakespeare wrote his version, so I think it's fair to say that both author and audience were conscious of context as they experienced the events of *Henry IV*.



**These plays move between very distinctive settings: royal court, rebels' castles, Eastcheap tavern, Gloucestershire orchard, battlefield. How did you and your designer set about creating these contrasting worlds?**

**MP:** On their own terms, eclectically. The court wore Edwardian dress, the rebels harked back variously to the eighteenth century and forward to twentieth-century warfare; the tavern was more or less 1980s, the Gloucestershire orchard perhaps a little pre-First World War, the battlefield went back to medieval chain mail and broadsword. All the time we were responding to the temperament of the characters and the atmospherics of each scene and asking the audience to accept unexpected contrasts. The plays are in a sense about the entire history of Britain.

**AN:** Bob Crowley designed the set and Deirdre Clancy the costumes. We started with a very beautiful wooden floor fringed with gold that both functioned as a practical space and had a strong resonance that could operate as a metaphor. The second thing we decided was that we would spend a lot of our money (because in the end it comes down to that) on the Boar's Head in Eastcheap, because we felt it was an aspect of the play that really needed to jump into the audience's imagination. In any of Shakespeare's plays, some parts require what I would loosely call "social realism" and some don't. *King Lear* does not require much social realism. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* requires a lot, because the plots operate and are triggered by different things. There are certain aspects of *Henry IV Part I* that require that social realism, and the Boar's Head tavern is one of those.

The tavern in *Part I* was a well of life: it absolutely teemed with energy and life. The tavern in *Part II* was a much emptier place. It was a lonely and quite sad place, a place for losers, a place where folk were in danger, so everyone got out very fast when they were told there was another war starting. I used it for Henry IV's great

monologue, “How many thousand of my poorest subjects / Are at this hour asleep?” [3.1.4–5]. I had King Henry wander through the tavern, in which the down-and-outs and the losers were all lying drunk and asleep.

This relates to the structure of *Part II*, which is absolutely brilliant. It all works contrapuntally. It’s contrapuntal between town and country, between war councils and petty quarrels. And one of the great pieces of counterpoint is at the death of King Henry IV. Henry IV dies in the Jerusalem chamber in the Palace of Westminster and the next scene is in Gloucestershire. From the very beginning of *Part I* he has wanted to go to the Holy Land. He keeps talking about how he wants to go to Jerusalem and eventually he does go there, but he goes there in death. I had his sons and the courtiers lift his body and carry him, and as his bed was lifted aloft and he came weaving downstage then upstage, I did a transformation into the countryside in Gloucestershire. I had a huge canopy with ladders poking up through it and all you saw were the legs of the actors. They were up the ladders, throwing apples down, and the dead body of the king was carried up through the canopy, up through this orchard, the orchard of England. We did this strange picture in slow motion, so it was like he’d gone to heaven, and so we had this fabulous juxtaposition which I think completely fulfilled Shakespeare’s purpose. It was a wonderful juxtaposition of the realistic—we had real beekeepers and real apple-pickers in the orchard—and the imagistic, the metaphorical. The man had finally found his way to Jerusalem: it was just eighty miles up the Thames in Gloucestershire. So we found a way in *Part II* of being much freer, much bolder, in the integration of the scenery with the structure of the play.

**MB:** Henry’s court was characterized by a simple silver bowl of water where he tried to wash his hands of the blood of Richard II.

Eastcheap was dominated by a battered old armchair that had taken the shape of David Warner’s Falstaff, and was framed by a

large and tattered red velvet drape, which spoke of warmth, theatrical artifice, and backstage assignations. Staff and customers also emerged from and disappeared into a smoky purgatory beneath the stage.

Nearly all the castles from Orleans and Bordeaux in *Henry VI Part I* to Harfleur in *Henry V* were carried by our great rusty Louise Bourgeois-style tower, that rose from its hell mouth gates up past an “I’m the King of the Castle” balcony to an ambiguous spiral stair, which rose to and fell from the grid seven meters above the stage.

Gloucestershire was a bale of hay, some bunting, blossom, and a barbecue.

Our battlefields were the bodies of men fighting over the rusty body of England, which Tom Piper created. Our set suggested arms and legs and a head and viscera.

**The plays dramatize the movement from feudalism (with the powerful barons of the north) to the early modern state (with an absolutist idea of monarchy). But they also speak to very Elizabethan concerns, such as the administration of the nation by means of a network of local justices (not all of whom are entirely free from corruption...). And at the same time, the idea of the education of a future leader is a timeless theme. So: medieval setting, Elizabethan, modern, or some eclectic mixture of them all?**

**MP:** I’m not so sure about this education of Hal. I think he has a great struggle between his impulses and his duties; he realizes what he will have to sacrifice, and in playing the part I came to think it costs him something. Not that he lets on: in *Henry V* he hardly mentions his past and is completely ruthless about hanging Bardolph for robbing a church, the kind of thing he might once have done himself. So if this is an education, it is not a very inclusive or compassionate one, more a hard lesson in *realpolitik*.

**AN:** We chose to set it pretty accurately in its period. I think it becomes a nonsense if you take it out of its period, to be absolutely honest, because we all know too much about other periods in which you might set it, and its own period is itself so interesting and resonant. When you've got a wonderful company of actors and you do it reasonably well, relevance jumps out at you.

**MB:** We found ourselves more interested in Shakespeare as a storyteller for his own age than as medievalist scholar. After the corruption of the old world, the old faith, and the would-be absolutist Richard, comes the cold wind of religious and political reform. Elizabeth may have seen herself characterized as Richard II, but she is also the reforming Protestant ruler beset with a dissenting and unruly populace that we see in *Henry IV*. The Archbishop of York, who "Turns insurrection to religion," can't fail to have reminded Shakespeare's audience of the Pilgrimage of Grace which threatened Elizabeth's father, Henry VIII, with a militarized Catholic backlash from the north.

We opted for three generations: the glamorous remnants of Richard/Elizabeth's golden age; the new black, simple, puritanical broom of Bullingbrook/Elizabeth; and the new generation of Hal and Poins willfully revisiting some of the decadent glamour of the past (with a little help from the saloon glamour of westerns).

**Prince Hal is sometimes one of the lads, sometimes coolly detached from his companions. Does this change over the two parts of the drama? Or, to ask the same question in another way: his first soliloquy, "I know you all," is crucial, isn't it? Do you see him speaking it essentially to himself or to the audience in the theater? Does it reveal him as a Machiavellian manipulator from the start, just playing a game in order to improve his own image, always intending to reject his companions when the time is ripe? Or is there much more ambivalence in the progress from "I know you all" early in *Part***

***I*** to the rejection speech, “I know thee not,” at the end of *Part II*?

**MP:** Yes, he oscillates—he’s tugged in two directions, as anybody might be. He pulls princely rank sometimes in the tavern, and in the court he plays the bad boy. He’s quite unresolved.

“I know you all” is a very unusual soliloquy in that it seems not to be addressed to the audience but to his offstage friends and is overheard by the audience. Shakespeare hardly ever does this. A soliloquizer normally confides in the theater audience more intimately than this, more trustingly. The effect here is to make Hal seem a little remote from us.

Playing him as what you call a Machiavellian is possible, but it’s not very interesting theatrically, like playing the Duke in *Measure for Measure* simply as a manipulator.



6. “O polished perturbation! Golden care!” Michael Pennington as Prince Hal and John Castle as Henry IV in the English Shakespeare Company’s *Wars of the Roses*, 1986–89.

Hal is very monosyllabic when he comes to the point—as in those two cases [his first soliloquy in *Part I* and the rejection speech at the

end of *Part II*], and also “I do, I will” when he promises Falstaff he will reject him. I think what keeps the play and the part alive is that he has great difficulty in resolving his conflicting urges. He sets out his program at the start, but he doesn’t find it that easy to execute. He leaves the tavern and goes to the court, but is disappointed by his father, who is manipulative and self-absorbed; he goes back to Falstaff, but realizes he can’t truly be part of that world either. There is a lot of implied conflict in him.

**AN:** He is all of those things. He’s very complex because if you try and play it as somebody who’s being manipulative and Machiavellian, in terms of a great scheme, it doesn’t sustain itself. It’s unactable and it’s incredible to the audience. The only way it works is if he thoroughly embraces the Eastcheap world and is a protagonist within it. You have to work back from that and from the fact that he says “I know you all.” Some people find it necessary to have the character one or the other; I think he’s both. I think he’s a human being and human beings are extremely complex people. Young people, especially, live several lives: they live the life they live with their parents and they live a completely different life with other people. That’s part of growing up and of how you relate to your parents. Hal has, in a way, been very lucky, in the sense that he has two fathers who each represent the two aspects of his character, so again you get this counterpoint which is very creative and very abrasive; it creates intellectual energy. I think Hal embraces that world fully, and the key moment for him is when he finally answers his dad: “Do not think so. You shall not find it so” [3.2.130]. It’s a monosyllabic line and you can’t rush that line, because there are too many vowels in it. That’s a turning point for the character; that’s when he realizes he actually has to decide. It’s also, interestingly enough, when he finds a voice. I think it’s when he finds the voice that will attack Hotspur and will attack the French in *Henry V*. He embraces both worlds happily, and I think that’s part of his personality. It’s part of the education of the king, but it’s more particularly part of the humanity of the king. Another

way of looking at it is to think of Hal's time with Falstaff as a time of disguise; the disguise allows him the freedom to explore and develop and thereby achieve wisdom. The character is both with and outside the disguise at one and the same time.

**MB:** Hal's genuine longing to be a hard-drinking, womanizing Corinthian is in tension from the beginning with his dark understanding that he is heir to the throne and therefore the target of flattery and envious rumor. He starts by flirting with the political theater of the deferred appearance of the sun from behind the cloud, and ends as the leading player in a much darker piece of political theater as he renounces Falstaff, and is groomed for war with France.

**The comparison and contrast between Prince Harry and Harry Hotspur is obviously crucial. Did you have particular stylistic or visual devices for establishing and exploring it?**

**MP:** Hotspur seemed like a version of Bonnie Prince Charlie—quite a romantic, eighteenth-century rebel. Hal was completely modern except on the battlefield when he went into chain mail. So as I said above we handled these things not so much conceptually as expressionistically.

**AN:** It's unavoidable, isn't it? All you have to do is read the play. It's totally and utterly in your face. It's a constant reminder to the audience of what the danger of Prince Hal's behavior is, that he is messing up big-time, because it's a dominating dramatic presence. Hotspur is such a charismatic man. He's a natural leader, he has such command of language, and he has all the other things that audiences want kings to have, like a good wife, a great sense of humor, the ability to deal with his elders in a fair, just, but

respectful manner. He's got all of those things; they're there like this great big elephant in the room.

**MB:** Our Percys were descended from Shakespeare's earlier father-and-son duo in *Henry VI*: the Talbots. By now the honorable code of chivalry of this pairing has become warped. The father caves in horribly in *Part II* and the son is bold but arrogant and reckless. Chivalry is stone dead by *Henry IV*.

Prince Hal moves in the other direction, from selfish, hedonistic criminality to a new contingent morality which will find its fullest paradoxical expression in *Henry V* (and then of course in *Hamlet*).

To answer the question: Geoffrey Streatfeild's Hal was more of a decadent dandy in *Part I* and Lex Shrapnel's Hotspur a glamorized vision of martial prowess.

It's sometimes said that in *Part I* Hal learns the military virtues of the true prince, in *Part II* the civic virtues. So Hotspur is a key opponent in *Part I*, the Lord Chief Justice a key figure in *Part II*. Was that a productive way of looking at it for you?



7. "O, Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth!" Geoffrey Streatfeild as Hal and Lex Shrapnel as Hotspur in Michael Boyd's



2007–08 RSC production.

**MP:** That didn't occur to me, and I don't think Shakespeare writes that programmatically. The developments in his characters are more subtle, less easily explained. And I'm not sure Hal learns any virtues really, only pragmatism—how to handle everybody effectively, in fact. The Lord Chief Justice is his third father figure, after Falstaff and the king—Falstaff is the one that loses out of course.

**AN:** Not at the time, but yes, that's quite interesting!

**MB:** No, but it is one template to apply to the plays. It feels more like the Lord Chief Justice's template than Shakespeare's, and it makes the royalist assumption that “becoming a true prince” is Shakespeare's subject.

Having staged all the histories, I began to realize that the drive for power and the yearning for the crown is one big politically acceptable MacGuffin [plot device] that allows Shakespeare to examine the nature of humanity under pressure. Shakespeare is consistently skeptical and critical of those in power, and this famously nonjudgmental author makes an exception for any character showing signs of being over-influenced by *Il Principe*.\*

In *Part I* Hal wrestles with authority and his father, trying to find/avoid his place in life. In *Part II* Hal confronts the mortality of the very man he has defined himself against and therefore confronts his own mortality. And he kills Falstaff.

Another difference between the two parts is that, simply in terms of size of parts, *Part I* is dominated by Hal, Falstaff, Hotspur, and King Henry, whereas *Part II* has a far larger number of substantial roles. Does that suggest that they are

very different kinds of play? *Part I* a star vehicle and *Part II* an ensemble vision?

**MP:** They're both ensemble pieces—fabulously so. Hotspur's death and Hal's withdrawal from events in *Part II* makes room for Shallow and Silence and the rest, and there's much more Falstaff too. I think *Part II* is just *Part I* rebalanced—not essentially different, except that there's definitely a sense of imminent change, and loss, with the king dying; the tavern scenes have less vitality and Hal generally keeps away from Falstaff, as if he was preparing himself for his future.

**AN:** The second half is for me the great director's challenge, because it is symphonic. Some plays work as concerti, with a series of solo turns, and some operate more symphonically. This is particularly true of the eight history plays. *Henry VI Part I*, *Part II*, and *Part III* operate symphonically. My mistake when I did *Richard III*, as the last of that tetralogy, is that until I started rehearsing it I thought it also operated symphonically, but it doesn't: it's written in a completely different manner to the *Henry VI*s. It's written as a series of concerti: one after the other, somebody stands up and plays the violin, plays the viola, plays the cello, plays the trumpet. Edward IV, Clarence, Hastings, one after the other they all stand up. It's not true to such an extent with the two parts of *Henry IV*, but it is to a degree.

I'd wanted to do *Henry IV Part I* and *Part II* for years, but for me you don't even start until you've got Falstaff, which I was very fortunate to get in Robert Stephens. That's the character that not only sets half the agenda of the plays, but is also the person who attracts all the other actors. If you don't have a genius Falstaff, then you won't get a brilliant Henry IV, and if you don't have a brilliant Henry IV, then the spine of the two plays is very shaky. Hal and Hotspur are much easier. It's for Falstaff, Henry IV, and Shallow that

you really need people at the top of their game to fulfill the majesty of those two plays.

**MB:** Not really. *Part II* was in part conceived as a vehicle for the runaway success of Falstaff as a “turn” in *Part I*.

### **Does Falstaff change between the two parts?**

**MP:** In *Part I*, Hal and he are wonderfully matched, especially in their capacity for (more or less) friendly insults. Falstaff feels Hal’s absence in *Part II* very keenly—he knows in his heart the best times are past. Falstaff talks about him all the time, wistfully.

**AN:** He matures somehow and gets wiser in the second part. I think the reason he appears to get older in the second part is because he has the Page. That’s why Shakespeare gives him a young person to walk about with, so you realize he’s old. Also in *Part II* he associates much more with people of his own age, particularly with his fellow students from when he was a law student at Temple. By hanging out with Silence and Shallow, on the one hand, and with a twelve-year-old boy, on the other hand, we get a strong whiff of mortality coming off Falstaff in *Part II*, which we don’t so much get in *Part I*.

**MB:** Falstaff has become a star in *Part II* because of his false success in Shrewsbury, and his real success in the theater in *Henry IV Part I*. Shakespeare promotes him to the courtly world and gives him exchanges with the most powerful people in the land, but then punishes him with cynicism, gout, and mortality.

He’s a force of nature in *Part I*, and in *Part II* he’s someone clinging on to influence, and opportunity, and life.

What did you learn in the process of rehearsing the great playacting scene in *Part I*—the preenactment by Hal and Falstaff of Hal's confrontation with his father? And did it teach you things that you could use when working on the actual encounters between the prince and his father?

**MP:** Not so much that, but the two successive scenes are at the center of the part. The scene in the Boar's Head has terrific tension—how far will Hal go in mocking his father? How far will he let Falstaff go? The onlookers don't know how loudly they're allowed to laugh. It's a great relief to Hal to make fun of his father; then he goes to see him for real and is very disappointed. He apologizes to the king and promises to toe the line but gets little thanks for it. Hal is very frustrated by his father. It's interesting that he takes Falstaff into battle with him and even lets him take credit for the death of Hotspur—it's as if he were serving notice that he'll do his duty by his father but he's not giving up his old ways that easily.

**AN:** Not particularly. It's most important because it stands as a rehearsal of the denial of Falstaff; that seems its main function to me. It was fun and funny—it couldn't not be that and I made it that—and I made it very anarchic, but my main purpose related to the denial of Falstaff. I remember feeling it was profoundly wrong that Hal engaged in this playacting. The whole idea of impersonating the monarch had a slight whiff of danger about it, and I think for an Elizabethan audience it would have been almost obscene: a very dangerous thing to do and very disrespectful. The dice are loaded very heavily against Hal in *Part I* and I think that's why it is such a dramatic piece: it's because he turns the stakes around, he overturns the odds, that it is remarkable.

**MB:** Clive Wood had already shaped his testosterone-fueled, reforming Bullingbrook in our *Richard II*, so we already knew that

Hal's encounters with his father would be bruising and straight out of Eugene O'Neill or Tennessee Williams.

There was a moving mismatch of styles in the playacting scene: David Warner's Falstaff revealing an old-fashioned delicacy that had no place in Bullingbrook's actual cold, pragmatic palace.

**It's mostly a male world, but, small as they are, the female parts—Hotspur's wife, Quickly, Doll—seem very significant, don't they? What was your take on the women in these plays?**

**MP:** I think Doll's little scene with Falstaff in *Part II* is a real love scene—both of them at their best; open, honest, and affectionate in ways they aren't elsewhere. Mistress Quickly represents one kind of female constancy in her love of Falstaff, and in a sense, Lady Percy the other, in her anger at Hotspur's withdrawing from her and her grief at his loss. They're very good parts, all three of them.



8. Robert Stephens as Falstaff and Joanne Pearce as Doll Tearsheet at Hostess Quickly's tavern in Eastcheap in *Part II* of Adrian Noble's 1991 RSC production.

**AN:** They're wonderful parts and you can do fantastic things with them with the right people. I was very lucky and we did great things with those parts. What Shakespeare does is genuinely present a great portrait of a nation. Look at the language of the scene of the two Carriers in Rochester: it's a couple of lorry drivers at Watford Gap services, it's a couple of guys who have done an overnight stay in a B&B somewhere. What he creates with that language—and of course it's distilled and slightly heightened—is the cadence of Elizabethan England. Shakespeare perfectly captures it: people working in an industrial situation. Now compare that with the sound of *Shallow and Silence*. Again, the cadence there is extraordinary. It's a remarkable soundscape, probably of Warwickshire when he was a boy, and that's part of the richness of the play. The *Henry VI* plays don't attempt that at all: you get little snippets of them with Cade and Dick the Butcher, but they are only snippets. In *Henry IV* they are in-depth portraits of a nation. You get the clergy, you get the courtiers, you get the tapsters, you get the prostitutes. Doll Tearsheet is an amazing portrait of a prostitute. Shakespeare captures the language in an extraordinary way.

**MB:** And Glendower's daughter possibly wins the war for Bullingbrook.

Ann Ogbomo's Kate Percy was an intelligent, beautiful, and feisty sketch for Shakespeare's later leading women, Rosalind and Beatrice.

As Mistress Quickly, Maureen Beattie brought her own instinctive understanding of comedic rhythms from Scottish variety to a much-loved character that can trace its ancestry to Noah's wife, the Wife of Bath, and beyond. Together with Alexia Healy's Doll, she maintained a haven of imperfect warmth in the cold world of Bullingbrook, until at last Eastcheap was literally dismantled in *Part II*.

Shakespeare's friend and rival Ben Jonson mocked his history plays for representing battles by means of nothing more than "three rusty swords"—and modern audiences are used to the epic battles of the Hollywood screen, complete with hundreds of extras. In light of this, how do you set about staging the battles convincingly? What balance between stylization and realism?

**MP:** That was quite snobbish of Jonson—they couldn't afford anything else. And Shakespeare always forestalls that argument, as he does in the first chorus in *Henry V*—the means are limited but, as he knows, his imaginative suggestiveness is great.

I think the battles should be as realistic as possible, especially the Hal/Hotspur—traditional one-to-one combat, sweating it out, like Richard III and Richmond; Hamlet and Laertes, too, if you like. They're cathartic confrontations. The difficulty is greater in the general battle scenes and skirmishes; the rhetoric can be a bit thumpy and there's a lot of rushing around without much character (though when Falstaff is on the battlefield there's terrific comic counterpoint). Sometimes directors stylize Shakespeare's battle scenes—slow motion, banners, mime, and so on. I don't much care for it myself, but I appreciate why it happens. I think you have to create the fog of war as realistically as you can. Interestingly enough, in the ESC version, though we used guns often, the big one-to-one set pieces we always did in chainmail and armor and broadswords, two individuals timelessly slugging it out to the death.



9. The battle scenes dramatized the essential qualities of a conflict with “three rusty swords” and the audience as extras in Michael Boyd’s 2007–08 RSC history cycle.

**AN:** You’ve answered the question actually: you get a balance between stylization and realism. Very simple technology plus a lot of imagination can lead you to extraordinary things. You first ask the question, “What is the battle about? What is this one saying?” At the end of *Part I* it’s Shrewsbury: the subject of that battle is the throne, it’s a fight for the throne. There was a piece of technology in the old Royal Shakespeare Theatre that no longer exists, which I discovered when I was doing *King Lear* with Michael Gambon. There were two huge lifts running up to the stage, each one nine meters by four meters, that could hold about seventy people each. On certain occasions like *Gad’s Hill* I used the great hole onstage where the lift shaft was. At the Battle of Shrewsbury there were people talking downstage but the hole was down, and in the trap under the stage I’d loaded the throne surrounded by the whole of King Henry’s courtiers, and then, with a huge amount of music and drumming, this throne came out of the earth. Not only did this trap ascend to stage level, it went above it. So when it hit stage level it was attacked in quite a stylized way by Hotspur’s men, with the entire company onstage, and it carried on up into the air until it was about



eight feet off the ground, and then it started to descend. Everyone was fighting, but they were actually fighting for the throne, and then when it came down to stage level it went into realistic swordplay. It's a bit unfair of Ben Jonson to say that, but he is absolutely right. What we delivered was a quite spectacular battle based upon the technology of that theater. We were just very lucky that we had it there. I think I used that huge hole in each of the seven history plays I did.

**MB:** Over eight plays, we worked on the battles employing many approaches, including the following:

1. Shakespeare's battles must serve the play in the same way as a song in a musical: they must move the story forward.
2. Renaissance dance was in part physical training for the men at court for battle. Our battles were to a greater or lesser extent all dances.
3. Our battles often carried a cosmological burden: i.e. they were a battle between heaven and hell fought out on earth. This combined with the spatial excitement of the Courtyard Theatre encouraged us to use four dimensions. Violence burst out from the grid, the stage, and the audience as often as from backstage.
4. Battles were staged with consciously shifting points of view, e.g. Shrewsbury was seen mostly from the rebels' perspective and picked up on the practice of decoy kings. We dramatized the courage it took to challenge an "anointed" king by opposing Hotspur with an army of kings.
5. We wanted to celebrate the chief advantage of theatrical over filmic battles: we were not the slaves of naturalism pursuing ever more plausible wounds and dismemberments. We were free to attempt to dramatize the essential qualities of a conflict. The hundreds of extras were supplied by the audience.

---

\**Il Principe* (1513) (Italian) *The Prince*: Niccolò Machiavelli's examination of Renaissance *realpolitik*.

# SHAKESPEARE'S CAREER IN THE THEATER

## BEGINNINGS

William Shakespeare was an extraordinarily intelligent man who was born and died in an ordinary market town in the English Midlands. He lived an uneventful life in an eventful age. Born in April 1564, he was the eldest son of John Shakespeare, a glove maker who was prominent on the town council until he fell into financial difficulties. Young William was educated at the local grammar school in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, where he gained a thorough grounding in the Latin language, the art of rhetoric, and classical poetry. He married Ann Hathaway and had three children (Susanna, then the twins Hamnet and Judith) before his twenty-first birthday: an exceptionally young age for the period. We do not know how he supported his family in the mid-1580s.

Like many clever country boys, he moved to the city in order to make his way in the world. Like many creative people, he found a career in the entertainment business. Public playhouses and professional full-time acting companies reliant on the market for their income were born in Shakespeare's childhood. When he arrived in London as a man, sometime in the late 1580s, a new phenomenon was in the making: the actor who is so successful that he becomes a "star." The word did not exist in its modern sense, but the pattern is recognizable: audiences went to the theater not so much to see a particular show as to witness the comedian Richard Tarlton or the dramatic actor Edward Alleyn.

Shakespeare was an actor before he was a writer. It appears not to have been long before he realized that he was never going to grow

into a great comedian like Tarlton or a great tragedian like Alleyn. Instead, he found a role within his company as the man who patched up old plays, breathing new life, new dramatic twists, into tired repertory pieces. He paid close attention to the work of the university-educated dramatists who were writing history plays and tragedies for the public stage in a style more ambitious, sweeping, and poetically grand than anything that had been seen before. But he may also have noted that what his friend and rival Ben Jonson would call “Marlowe’s mighty line” sometimes faltered in the mode of comedy. Going to university, as Christopher Marlowe did, was all well and good for honing the arts of rhetorical elaboration and classical allusion, but it could lead to a loss of the common touch. To stay close to a large segment of the potential audience for public theater, it was necessary to write for clowns as well as kings and to intersperse the flights of poetry with the humor of the tavern, the privy, and the brothel: Shakespeare was the first to establish himself early in his career as an equal master of tragedy, comedy, and history. He realized that theater could be the medium to make the national past available to a wider audience than the elite who could afford to read large history books: his signature early works include not only the classical tragedy *Titus Andronicus* but also the sequence of English historical plays on the Wars of the Roses.

He also invented a new role for himself, that of in-house company dramatist. Where his peers and predecessors had to sell their plays to the theater managers on a poorly paid piecework basis, Shakespeare took a percentage of the box-office income. The Lord Chamberlain’s Men constituted themselves in 1594 as a joint stock company, with the profits being distributed among the core actors who had invested as sharers. Shakespeare acted himself—he appears in the cast lists of some of Ben Jonson’s plays as well as the list of actors’ names at the beginning of his own collected works—but his principal duty was to write two or three plays a year for the company. By holding shares, he was effectively earning himself a royalty on his work, something no author had ever done before in England. When the Lord Chamberlain’s Men collected their fee for

performance at court in the Christmas season of 1594, three of them went along to the Treasurer of the Chamber: not just Richard Burbage the tragedian and Will Kempe the clown, but also Shakespeare the scriptwriter. That was something new.

The next four years were the golden period in Shakespeare's career, though overshadowed by the death of his only son, Hamnet, aged eleven, in 1596. In his early thirties and in full command of both his poetic and his theatrical medium, he perfected his art of comedy, while also developing his tragic and historical writing in new ways. In 1598, Francis Meres, a Cambridge University graduate with his finger on the pulse of the London literary world, praised Shakespeare for his excellence across the genres:

As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latins, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love Labours Lost*, his *Love Labours Won*, his *Midsummer Night Dream* and his *Merchant of Venice*: for tragedy his *Richard the 2*, *Richard the 3*, *Henry the 4*, *King John*, *Titus Andronicus* and his *Romeo and Juliet*.

For Meres, as for the many writers who praised the “honey-flowing vein” of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, narrative poems written when the theaters were closed due to plague in 1593–94, Shakespeare was marked above all by his linguistic skill, by the gift of turning elegant poetic phrases.

## PLAYHOUSES

Elizabethan playhouses were “thrust” or “one-room” theaters. To understand Shakespeare's original theatrical life, we have to forget about the indoor theater of later times, with its proscenium arch and curtain that would be opened at the beginning and closed at the end of each act. In the proscenium arch theater, stage and auditorium

are effectively two separate rooms: the audience looks from one world into another as if through the imaginary “fourth wall” framed by the proscenium. The picture-frame stage, together with the elaborate scenic effects and backdrops beyond it, created the illusion of a self-contained world—especially once nineteenth-century developments in the control of artificial lighting meant that the auditorium could be darkened and the spectators made to focus on the lighted stage. Shakespeare, by contrast, wrote for a bare platform stage with a standing audience gathered around it in a courtyard in full daylight. The audience were always conscious of themselves and their fellow spectators, and they shared the same “room” as the actors. A sense of immediate presence and the creation of rapport with the audience were all-important. The actor could not afford to imagine he was in a closed world, with silent witnesses dutifully observing him from the darkness.

Shakespeare’s theatrical career began at the Rose Theatre in Southwark. The stage was wide and shallow, trapezoid in shape, like a lozenge. This design had a great deal of potential for the theatrical equivalent of cinematic split-screen effects, whereby one group of characters would enter at the door at one end of the tiring-house wall at the back of the stage and another group through the door at the other end, thus creating two rival tableaux. Many of the battle-heavy and faction-filled plays that premiered at the Rose have scenes of just this sort.

At the rear of the Rose stage, there were three capacious exits, each over ten feet wide. Unfortunately, the very limited excavation of a fragmentary portion of the original Globe site, in 1989, revealed nothing about the stage. The first Globe was built in 1599 with similar proportions to those of another theater, the Fortune, albeit that the former was polygonal and looked circular, whereas the latter was rectangular. The building contract for the Fortune survives and allows us to infer that the stage of the Globe was probably substantially wider than it was deep (perhaps forty-three feet wide and twenty-seven feet deep). It may well have been tapered at the front, like that of the Rose.

The capacity of the Globe was said to have been enormous, perhaps in excess of three thousand. It has been conjectured that about eight hundred people may have stood in the yard, with two thousand or more in the three layers of covered galleries. The other “public” playhouses were also of large capacity, whereas the indoor Blackfriars theater that Shakespeare’s company began using in 1608—the former refectory of a monastery—had overall internal dimensions of a mere forty-six by sixty feet. It would have made for a much more intimate theatrical experience and had a much smaller capacity, probably of about six hundred people. Since they paid at least sixpence a head, the Blackfriars attracted a more select or “private” audience. The atmosphere would have been closer to that of an indoor performance before the court in the Whitehall Palace or at Richmond. That Shakespeare always wrote for indoor production at court as well as outdoor performance in the public theater should make us cautious about inferring, as some scholars have, that the opportunity provided by the intimacy of the Blackfriars led to a significant change toward a “chamber” style in his last plays—which, besides, were performed at both the Globe and the Blackfriars. After the occupation of the Blackfriars a five-act structure seems to have become more important to Shakespeare. That was because of artificial lighting: there were musical interludes between the acts, while the candles were trimmed and replaced. Again, though, something similar must have been necessary for indoor court performances throughout his career.

Front of house there were the “gatherers” who collected the money from audience members: a penny to stand in the open-air yard, another penny for a place in the covered galleries, sixpence for the prominent “lord’s rooms” to the side of the stage. In the indoor “private” theaters, gallants from the audience who fancied making themselves part of the spectacle sat on stools on the edge of the stage itself. Scholars debate as to how widespread this practice was in the public theaters such as the Globe. Once the audience were in place and the money counted, the gatherers were available to be extras onstage. That is one reason why battles and crowd scenes

often come later rather than early in Shakespeare's plays. There was no formal prohibition upon performance by women, and there certainly were women among the gatherers, so it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that female crowd members were played by females.

The play began at two o'clock in the afternoon and the theater had to be cleared by five. After the main show, there would be a jig—which consisted not only of dancing, but also of knockabout comedy (it is the origin of the farcical “afterpiece” in the eighteenth-century theater). So the time available for a Shakespeare play was about two and a half hours, somewhere between the “two hours’ traffic” mentioned in the prologue to *Romeo and Juliet* and the “three hours’ spectacle” referred to in the preface to the 1647 Folio of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. The prologue to a play by Thomas Middleton refers to a thousand lines as “one hour's words,” so the likelihood is that about two and a half thousand, or a maximum of three thousand lines, made up the performed text. This is indeed the length of most of Shakespeare's comedies, whereas many of his tragedies and histories are much longer, raising the possibility that he wrote full scripts, possibly with eventual publication in mind, in the full knowledge that the stage version would be heavily cut. The short Quarto texts published in his lifetime—they used to be called “Bad” Quartos—provide fascinating evidence as to the kind of cutting that probably took place. So, for instance, the First Quarto of *Hamlet* neatly merges two occasions when Hamlet is overheard, the “Fishmonger” and the “nunnery” scenes.

The social composition of the audience was mixed. The poet Sir John Davies wrote of “A thousand townsmen, gentlemen and whores, / Porters and servingmen” who would “together throng” at the public playhouses. Though moralists associated female play-going with adultery and the sex trade, many perfectly respectable citizens' wives were regular attendees. Some, no doubt, resembled the modern groupie: a story attested in two different sources has one citizen's wife making a postshow assignation with Richard Burbage and ending up in bed with Shakespeare—supposedly



eliciting from the latter the quip that William the Conqueror was before Richard III. Defenders of theater liked to say that by witnessing the comeuppance of villains on the stage, audience members would repent of their own wrongdoings, but the reality is that most people went to the theater then, as they do now, for entertainment more than moral edification. Besides, it would be foolish to suppose that audiences behaved in a homogeneous way: a pamphlet of the 1630s tells of how two men went to see *Pericles* and one of them laughed while the other wept. Bishop John Hall complained that people went to church for the same reasons that they went to the theater: “for company, for custom, for recreation ... to feed his eyes or his ears ... or perhaps for sleep.”

Men-about-town and clever young lawyers went to be seen as much as to see. In the modern popular imagination, shaped not least by *Shakespeare in Love* and the opening sequence of Laurence Olivier’s *Henry V* film, the penny-paying groundlings stand in the yard hurling abuse or encouragement and hazelnuts or orange peel at the actors, while the sophisticates in the covered galleries appreciate Shakespeare’s soaring poetry. The reality was probably the other way around. A “groundling” was a kind of fish, so the nickname suggests the penny audience standing below the level of the stage and gazing in silent openmouthed wonder at the spectacle unfolding above them. The more difficult audience members, who kept up a running commentary of clever remarks on the performance and who occasionally got into quarrels with players, were the gallants. Like Hollywood movies in modern times, Elizabethan and Jacobean plays exercised a powerful influence on the fashion and behavior of the young. John Marston mocks the lawyers who would open their lips, perhaps to court a girl, and out would “flow / Naught but pure Juliet and Romeo.”

## THE ENSEMBLE AT WORK

In the absence of typewriters and photocopying machines, reading aloud would have been the means by which the company got to

know a new play. The tradition of the playwright reading his complete script to the assembled company endured for generations. A copy would then have been taken to the Master of the Revels for licensing. The theater book-holder or prompter would then have copied the parts for distribution to the actors. A partbook consisted of the character's lines, with each speech preceded by the last three or four words of the speech before, the so-called "cue." These would have been taken away and studied or "conned." During this period of learning the parts, an actor might have had some one-to-one instruction, perhaps from the dramatist, perhaps from a senior actor who had played the same part before, and, in the case of an apprentice, from his master. A high percentage of Desdemona's lines occur in dialogue with Othello, of Lady Macbeth's with Macbeth, Cleopatra's with Antony, and Volumnia's with Coriolanus. The roles would almost certainly have been taken by the apprentice of the lead actor, usually Burbage, who delivers the majority of the cues. Given that apprentices lodged with their masters, there would have been ample opportunity for personal instruction, which may be what made it possible for young men to play such demanding parts.



10. Hypothetical reconstruction of the interior of an Elizabethan playhouse during a performance.

After the parts were learned, there may have been no more than a single rehearsal before the first performance. With six different plays to be put on every week, there was no time for more. Actors, then, would go into a show with a very limited sense of the whole. The notion of a collective rehearsal process that is itself a process of discovery for the actors is wholly modern and would have been incomprehensible to Shakespeare and his original ensemble. Given the number of parts an actor had to hold in his memory, the forgetting of lines was probably more frequent than in the modern theater. The book-holder was on hand to prompt.

Backstage personnel included the property man, the tire-man who oversaw the costumes, call boys, attendants, and the musicians, who might play at various times from the main stage, the rooms above, and within the tiring-house. Scriptwriters sometimes made a nuisance of themselves backstage. There was often tension between the acting companies and the freelance playwrights from whom they purchased scripts: it was a smart move on the part of Shakespeare and the Lord Chamberlain's Men to bring the writing process in-house.

Scenery was limited, though sometimes set pieces were brought on (a bank of flowers, a bed, the mouth of hell). The trapdoor from below, the gallery stage above, and the curtained discovery space at the back allowed for an array of special effects: the rising of ghosts and apparitions, the descent of gods, dialogue between a character at a window and another at ground level, the revelation of a statue or a pair of lovers playing at chess. Ingenious use could be made of props, as with the ass's head in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In a theater that does not clutter the stage with the material paraphernalia of everyday life, those objects that are deployed may take on powerful symbolic weight, as when Shylock bears his weighing scales in one hand and knife in the other, thus becoming a parody of the figure of Justice who traditionally bears a sword and a balance. Among the more significant items in the property cupboard of Shakespeare's company, there would have been a throne (the "chair of state"), joint stools, books, bottles, coins, purses, letters

(which are brought onstage, read or referred to on about eighty occasions in the complete works), maps, gloves, a set of stocks (in which Kent is put in *King Lear*), rings, rapiers, daggers, broadswords, staves, pistols, masks and vizards, heads and skulls, torches and tapers and lanterns which served to signal night scenes on the daylit stage, a buck's head, an ass's head, animal costumes. Live animals also put in appearances, most notably the dog Crab in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and possibly a young polar bear in *The Winter's Tale*.

The costumes were the most important visual dimension of the play. Playwrights were paid between £2 and £6 per script, whereas Alleyn was not averse to paying £20 for "a black velvet cloak with sleeves embroidered all with silver and gold." No matter the period of the play, actors always wore contemporary costume. The excitement for the audience came not from any impression of historical accuracy, but from the richness of the attire and perhaps the transgressive thrill of the knowledge that here were commoners like themselves strutting in the costumes of courtiers in effective defiance of the strict sumptuary laws whereby in real life people had to wear the clothes that befitted their social station.

To an even greater degree than props, costumes could carry symbolic importance. Racial characteristics could be suggested: a breastplate and helmet for a Roman soldier, a turban for a Turk, long robes for exotic characters such as Moors, a gabardine for a Jew. The figure of Time, as in *The Winter's Tale*, would be equipped with hourglass, scythe, and wings; Rumour, who speaks the prologue of *Henry IV Part II*, wore a costume adorned with a thousand tongues. The wardrobe in the tiring-house of the Globe would have contained much of the same stock as that of rival manager Philip Henslowe at the Rose: green gowns for outlaws and foresters, black for melancholy men such as Jaques and people in mourning such as the Countess in *All's Well That Ends Well* (at the beginning of *Hamlet*, the prince is still in mourning black when everyone else is in festive garb for the wedding of the new king), a gown and hood for a friar (or a feigned friar like the Duke in

*Measure for Measure*), blue coats and tawny to distinguish the followers of rival factions, a leather apron and ruler for a carpenter (as in the opening scene of *Julius Caesar*—and in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where this is the only sign that Peter Quince is a carpenter), a cockle hat with staff and a pair of sandals for a pilgrim or palmer (the disguise assumed by Helen in *All's Well*), bodices and kirtles with farthingales beneath for the boys who are to be dressed as girls. A gender switch such as that of Rosalind or Jessica seems to have taken between fifty and eighty lines of dialogue—Viola does not resume her “maiden weeds,” but remains in her boy’s costume to the end of *Twelfth Night* because a change would have slowed down the action at just the moment it was speeding to a climax. Henslowe’s inventory also included “a robe for to go invisible”: Oberon, Puck, and Ariel must have had something similar.

As the costumes appealed to the eyes, so there was music for the ears. Comedies included many songs. Desdemona’s willow song, perhaps a late addition to the text, is a rare and thus exceptionally poignant example from tragedy. Trumpets and tuckets sounded for ceremonial entrances, drums denoted an army on the march. Background music could create atmosphere, as at the beginning of *Twelfth Night*, during the lovers’ dialogue near the end of *The Merchant of Venice*, when the statue seemingly comes to life in *The Winter’s Tale*, and for the revival of Pericles and of Lear (in the Quarto text, but not the Folio). The haunting sound of the hautbois suggested a realm beyond the human, as when the god Hercules is imagined deserting Mark Antony. Dances symbolized the harmony of the end of a comedy—though in Shakespeare’s world of mingled joy and sorrow, someone is usually left out of the circle.

The most important resource was, of course, the actors themselves. They needed many skills: in the words of one contemporary commentator, “dancing, activity, music, song, elocution, ability of body, memory, skill of weapon, pregnancy of wit.” Their bodies were as significant as their voices. Hamlet tells the player to “suit the action to the word, the word to the action”: moments of strong emotion, known as “passions,” relied on a

repertoire of dramatic gestures as well as a modulation of the voice. When Titus Andronicus has had his hand chopped off, he asks “How can I grace my talk, / Wanting a hand to give it action?” A pen portrait of “The Character of an Excellent Actor” by the dramatist John Webster is almost certainly based on his impression of Shakespeare’s leading man, Richard Burbage: “By a full and significant action of body, he charms our attention: sit in a full theater, and you will think you see so many lines drawn from the circumference of so many ears, whiles the actor is the centre....”

Though Burbage was admired above all others, praise was also heaped upon the apprentice players whose alto voices fitted them for the parts of women. A spectator at Oxford in 1610 records how the audience were reduced to tears by the pathos of Desdemona’s death. The Puritans who fumed about the biblical prohibition upon cross-dressing and the encouragement to sodomy constituted by the sight of an adult male kissing a teenage boy onstage were a small minority. Little is known, however, about the characteristics of the leading apprentices in Shakespeare’s company. It may perhaps be inferred that one was a lot taller than the other, since Shakespeare often wrote for a pair of female friends, one tall and fair, the other short and dark (Helena and Hermia, Rosalind and Celia, Beatrice and Hero).

We know little about Shakespeare’s own acting roles—an early allusion indicates that he often took royal parts, and a venerable tradition gives him old Adam in *As You Like It* and the ghost of old King Hamlet. Save for Burbage’s lead roles and the generic part of the clown, all such castings are mere speculation. We do not even know for sure whether the original Falstaff was Will Kempe or another actor who specialized in comic roles, Thomas Pope.

Kempe left the company in early 1599. Tradition has it that he fell out with Shakespeare over the matter of excessive improvisation. He was replaced by Robert Armin, who was less of a clown and more of a cerebral wit: this explains the difference between such parts as Lancelet Gobbo and Dogberry, which were written for Kempe, and

the more verbally sophisticated Feste and Lear's Fool, which were written for Armin.

One thing that is clear from surviving "plots" or storyboards of plays from the period is that a degree of doubling was necessary. *Henry VI Part II* has over sixty speaking parts, but more than half of the characters only appear in a single scene and most scenes have only six to eight speakers. At a stretch, the play could be performed by thirteen actors. When Thomas Platter saw *Julius Caesar* at the Globe in 1599, he noted that there were about fifteen. Why doesn't Paris go to the Capulet ball in *Romeo and Juliet*? Perhaps because he was doubled with Mercutio, who does. In *The Winter's Tale*, Mamillius might have come back as Perdita and Antigonus been doubled by Camillo, making the partnership with Paulina at the end a very neat touch. Titania and Oberon are often played by the same pair as Hippolyta and Theseus, suggesting a symbolic matching of the rulers of the worlds of night and day, but it is questionable whether there would have been time for the necessary costume changes. As so often, one is left in a realm of tantalizing speculation.

## THE KING'S MAN

On Queen Elizabeth's death in 1603, the new king, James I, who had held the Scottish throne as James VI since he had been an infant, immediately took the Lord Chamberlain's Men under his direct patronage. Henceforth they would be the King's Men, and for the rest of Shakespeare's career they were favored with far more court performances than any of their rivals. There even seem to have been rumors early in the reign that Shakespeare and Burbage were being considered for knighthoods, an unprecedented honor for mere actors—and one that in the event was not accorded to a member of the profession for nearly three hundred years, when the title was bestowed upon Henry Irving, the leading Shakespearean actor of Queen Victoria's reign.

Shakespeare's productivity rate slowed in the Jacobean years, not because of age or some personal trauma, but because there were

frequent outbreaks of plague, causing the theaters to be closed for long periods. The King's Men were forced to spend many months on the road. Between November 1603 and 1608, they were to be found at various towns in the south and Midlands, though Shakespeare probably did not tour with them by this time. He had bought a large house back home in Stratford and was accumulating other property. He may indeed have stopped acting soon after the new king took the throne. With the London theaters closed so much of the time and a large repertoire on the stocks, Shakespeare seems to have focused his energies on writing a few long and complex tragedies that could have been played on demand at court: *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, and *Cymbeline* are among his longest and poetically grandest plays. *Macbeth* survives only in a shorter text, which shows signs of adaptation after Shakespeare's death. The bitterly satirical *Timon of Athens*, apparently a collaboration with Thomas Middleton that may have failed on the stage, also belongs to this period. In comedy, too, he wrote longer and morally darker works than in the Elizabethan period, pushing at the very bounds of the form in *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well That Ends Well*.

From 1608 onward, when the King's Men began occupying the indoor Blackfriars playhouse (as a winter house, meaning that they only used the outdoor Globe in summer?), Shakespeare turned to a more romantic style. His company had a great success with a revived and altered version of an old pastoral play called *Mucedorus*. It even featured a bear. The younger dramatist John Fletcher, meanwhile, sometimes working in collaboration with Francis Beaumont, was pioneering a new style of tragicomedy, a mix of romance and royalism laced with intrigue and pastoral excursions. Shakespeare experimented with this idiom in *Cymbeline* and it was presumably with his blessing that Fletcher eventually took over as the King's Men's company dramatist. The two writers apparently collaborated on three plays in the years 1612–14: a lost romance called *Cardenio* (based on the love-madness of a character in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*), *Henry VIII* (originally staged with the title "All Is True"), and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, a dramatization of



Chaucer's "Knight's Tale." These were written after Shakespeare's two final solo-authored plays, *The Winter's Tale*, a self-consciously old-fashioned work dramatizing the pastoral romance of his old enemy Robert Greene, and *The Tempest*, which at one and the same time drew together multiple theatrical traditions, diverse reading, and contemporary interest in the fate of a ship that had been wrecked on the way to the New World.

The collaborations with Fletcher suggest that Shakespeare's career ended with a slow fade rather than the sudden retirement supposed by the nineteenth-century Romantic critics who read Prospero's epilogue to *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's personal farewell to his art. In the last few years of his life Shakespeare certainly spent more of his time in Stratford-upon-Avon, where he became further involved in property dealing and litigation. But his London life also continued. In 1613 he made his first major London property purchase: a freehold house in the Blackfriars district, close to his company's indoor theater. *The Two Noble Kinsmen* may have been written as late as 1614, and Shakespeare was in London on business a little over a year before he died of an unknown cause at home in Stratford-upon-Avon in 1616, probably on his fifty-second birthday.

About half the sum of his works were published in his lifetime, in texts of variable quality. A few years after his death, his fellow actors began putting together an authorized edition of his complete *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*. It appeared in 1623, in large "Folio" format. This collection of thirty-six plays gave Shakespeare his immortality. In the words of his fellow dramatist Ben Jonson, who contributed two poems of praise at the start of the Folio, the body of his work made him "a monument without a tomb":

And art alive still while thy book doth live  
And we have wits to read and praise to give...  
He was not of an age, but for all time!

## SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS: A CHRONOLOGY

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1589–91                       | ? <i>Arden of Faversham</i> (possible part authorship)   |
| 1589–92                       | <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>   |
| 1589–92                       | ? <i>Edward the Third</i> (possible part authorship)   |
| 1591                          | <i>The Second Part of Henry the Sixth</i> , originally called  |
|                               | <i>The First Part of the Contention Betwixt the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster</i> (element of coauthorship possible)                   |
| 1591                          | <i>The Third Part of Henry the Sixth</i> , originally called <i>The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York</i> (element of co-authorship probable) |
| 1591–92                       | <i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>   |
| 1591–92; perhaps revised 1594 | <i>The Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus</i> (probably cowritten with, or revising an earlier version by, George Peele)                     |
| 1592                          | <i>The First Part of Henry the Sixth</i> , probably with Thomas Nashe and others   |
| 1592/94                       | <i>King Richard the Third</i>  |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1593               | <i>Venus and Adonis</i> (poem)  |
| 1593–94            | <i>The Rape of Lucrece</i> (poem)   |
| 1593–1608          | <i>Sonnets</i> (154 poems, published 1609 with <i>A Lover's Complaint</i> , a poem of disputed authorship)  |
| 1592–94 or 1600–03 | <i>Sir Thomas More</i> (a single scene for a play originally by Anthony Munday, with other revisions by Henry Chettle, Thomas Dekker, and Thomas Heywood) |
| 1594               | <i>The Comedy of Errors</i>   |
| 1595               | <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>   |
| 1595–97            | <i>Love's Labour's Won</i> (a lost play, unless the original title for another comedy)  |
| 1595–96            | <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>  |
| 1595–96            | <i>The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet</i>  |
| 1595–96            | <i>King Richard the Second</i>  |
| 1595–97            | <i>The Life and Death of King John</i> (possibly earlier)   |
| 1596–97            | <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>   |
| 1596–97            | <i>The First Part of Henry the Fourth</i>   |
| 1597–98            | <i>The Second Part of Henry the Fourth</i>  |
| 1598               | <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>   |
| 1598–99            | <i>The Passionate Pilgrim</i> (20 poems, some not by Shakespeare)   |
| 1599               | <i>The Life of Henry the Fifth</i>  |
| 1599               | "To the Queen" (epilogue for a court performance)   |
| 1599               | <i>As You Like It</i>   |
| 1599               | <i>The Tragedy of Julius Caesar</i>   |
| 1600–01            | <i>The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of</i>   |

|         |   |
|---------|---|
|         | <i>Denmark</i> (perhaps revising an earlier version)  |
| 1600–01 | <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i> (perhaps revising version of 1597–99)   |
| 1601    | “Let the Bird of Loudest Lay” (poem, known since 1807 as “The Phoenix and Turtle” [turtledove])                           |
| 1601    | <i>Twelfth Night, or What You Will</i>  |
| 1601–02 | <i>The Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida</i>  |
| 1604    | <i>The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice</i>   |
| 1604    | <i>Measure for Measure</i>  |
| 1605    | <i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>  |
| 1605    | <i>The Life of Timon of Athens</i> , with Thomas Middleton  |
| 1605–06 | <i>The Tragedy of King Lear</i>   |
| 1605–08 | ? contribution to <i>The Four Plays in One</i> (lost, except for <i>A Yorkshire Tragedy</i> , mostly by Thomas Middleton) |
| 1606    | <i>The Tragedy of Macbeth</i> (surviving text has additional scenes by Thomas Middleton)                                  |
| 1606–07 | <i>The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra</i>  |
| 1608    | <i>The Tragedy of Coriolanus</i>  |
| 1608    | <i>Pericles, Prince of Tyre</i> , with George Wilkins   |
| 1610    | <i>The Tragedy of Cymbeline</i>   |
| 1611    | <i>The Winter’s Tale</i>  |
| 1611    | <i>The Tempest</i>  |
| 1612–13 | <i>Cardenio</i> , with John Fletcher (survives only in later adaptation called <i>Double Falsehood</i> by Lewis Theobald) |

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 1613    | <i>Henry VIII (All Is True)</i> , with John Fletcher |
| 1613–14 | <i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i> , with John Fletcher    |

# KINGS AND QUEENS OF ENGLAND: FROM THE HISTORY PLAYS TO SHAKESPEARE'S LIFETIME

|                      | <i>Lifespan</i> | <i>Reign</i>                                  |
|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| <b>Angevins:</b>     |                 |   |
| Henry II             | 1133–1189       | 1154–1189                                     |
| Richard I            | 1157–1199       | 1189–1199                                     |
| John                 | 1166–1216       | 1199–1216                                     |
| Henry III            | 1207–1272       | 1216–1272                                     |
| Edward I             | 1239–1307       | 1272–1307                                     |
| Edward II            | 1284–1327       | 1307–1327 deposed                             |
| Edward III           | 1312–1377       | 1327–1377                                     |
| Richard II           | 1367–1400       | 1377–1399 deposed                             |
| <b>Lancastrians:</b> |                 |   |
| Henry IV             | 1367–1413       | 1399–1413                                     |
| Henry V              | 1387–1422       | 1413–1422                                     |
| Henry VI             | 1421–1471       | 1422–1461 and 1470–1471                       |
| <b>Yorkists:</b>     |                 |   |
| Edward IV            | 1442–1483       | 1461–1470 and 1471–1483                       |
| Edward V             | 1470–1483       | 1483 not crowned:<br>deposed and assassinated |
| Richard III          | 1452–1485       | 1483–1485                                     |
| <b>Tudors:</b>       |                 |   |
| Henry VII            | 1457–1509       | 1485–1509                                     |
| Henry VIII           | 1491–1547       | 1509–1547                                     |
| Edward VI            | 1537–1553       | 1547–1553                                     |

|                 | <i><b>Lifespan</b></i> | <i><b>Reign</b></i>                           |
|-----------------|------------------------|---|
| Jane            | 1537–1554              | 1553 not crowned: deposed<br>and executed     |
| Mary I          | 1516–1558              | 1553–1558                                     |
| Philip of Spain | 1527–1598              | 1554–1558 co-regent with<br>Mary              |
| Elizabeth I     | 1533–1603              | 1558–1603                                     |
| <b>Stuart:</b>  |                        |   |
| James I         | 1566–1625              | 1603–1625 James VI of<br>Scotland (1567–1625) |

# THE HISTORY BEHIND THE HISTORIES: A CHRONOLOGY

Square brackets indicate events that happen just outside a play's timescale but are mentioned in the play.

| <i><b>Date</b></i> | <i><b>Event</b></i>                                  | <i><b>Location</b></i>   | <i><b>Play</b></i> |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 22 May 1200        | Truce between King John and Philip Augustus          | Le Goulet, Normandy      | <i>King John</i>   |
| Apr 1203           | Death of Arthur                                      | Rouen                    | <i>King John</i>   |
| 1209               | Pope Innocent III excommunicates King John           |                          | <i>King John</i>   |
| 18/19 Oct 1216     | Death of King John                                   | Swineshead, Lincolnshire | <i>King John</i>   |
| Apr–Sep 1398       | Quarrel, duel, and exile of Bullingbrook and Mowbray | Coventry                 | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| 3 Feb 1399         | Death of John of Gaunt                               | Leicester                | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| Jul 1399           | Bullingbrook lands in England                        | Ravenspur, Yorkshire     | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| Aug 1399           | Richard II captured by Bullingbrook                  | Wales                    | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| 30 Sep 1399        | Richard II abdicates                                 | London                   | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| 13 Oct 1399        | Coronation of Henry IV                               | London                   | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| Jan–Feb 1400       | Death of Richard II                                  | Pontefract Castle        | <i>Richard II</i>  |
| 22 Jun 1402        | Owen Glendower captures Edmund Mortimer              | Bryn Glas, Wales         | <i>I Henry IV</i>  |
| 14 Sep 1402        | Henry Percy defeats Scottish army                    | Homildon Hill, Yorkshire | <i>I Henry IV</i>  |



| <b><i>Date</i></b> | <b><i>Event</i></b>   | <b><i>Location</i></b>                   | <b><i>Play</i></b>        |
|--------------------|---|--|---------------------------|
| 21 Jul 1403        | Battle of Shrewsbury; death of Henry Percy (Hotspur)  | Battlefield, near Shrewsbury, Shropshire | <i>1 &amp; 2 Henry IV</i> |
| Feb 1405           | Tripartite Indenture between Owen Glendower, Edmund Mortimer, and Northumberland (Henry Percy)        | Bangor                                   | <i>1 Henry IV</i>         |
| May–Jun 1405       | Rebellion of Archbishop of York (Richard Scroop), Earl of Norfolk (Thomas Mowbray), and Lord Bardolph | Yorkshire                                | <i>2 Henry IV</i>         |
| 8 Jun 1405         | Trial and execution of Archbishop of York and Earl of Norfolk   | York                                     | <i>2 Henry IV</i>         |
| 20 Mar 1413        | Death of Henry IV   | Westminster Abbey                        | <i>2 Henry IV</i>         |
| 9 Apr 1413         | Coronation of Henry V   | Westminster Abbey                        | <i>2 Henry IV</i>         |
| c.1415–16?         | Death of Owen Glendower   | Wales?                                   | <i>2 Henry IV</i>         |
| Early Aug 1415     | Execution of Earl of Cambridge, Lord Scroop, and Sir Thomas Grey                                      | Southampton                              | <i>Henry V</i>            |
| 14 Aug–22 Sep 1415 | Siege of Harfleur   | Harfleur, Normandy                       | <i>Henry V</i>            |
| 25 Oct 1415        | Battle of Agincourt   | Agincourt, Pas de Calais                 | <i>Henry V</i>            |
| 31 Aug 1422        | Death of Henry V  | Bois de Vincennes, near Paris            | <i>1 Henry VI</i>         |
| 18 Jan 1425        | Death of Edmund Mortimer  | Ireland                                  | <i>1 Henry VI</i>         |
| Oct 1428–May 1429  | Siege of Orléans  | Orléans                                  | <i>1 Henry VI</i>         |
| 17 Oct 1428        | Death of Lord Salisbury   | Orléans                                  | <i>1 Henry VI</i>         |

| <b><i>Date</i></b> | <b><i>Event</i></b>                                | <b><i>Location</i></b>      | <b><i>Play</i></b>  |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 18 Jun 1429        | Capture of Lord Talbot at battle of Patay          | Patay, near Orléans         | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 18 Jul 1429        | Coronation of Charles VII                          | Rheims Cathedral            | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 6 Nov 1429         | Coronation of Henry VI as King of England          | Westminster Abbey           | <i>[1 Henry VI]</i> |
| 23 May 1430        | Capture of Joan of Arc                             | Compiègne, near Soissons    | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 30 May 1431        | Execution of Joan of Arc                           | Saint-Ouen, near Paris      | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 16 Dec 1431        | Coronation of Henry VI as King of France           | Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 14 Sep 1435        | Death of Duke of Bedford                           | Rouen                       | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| Summer–Autumn 1441 | Arrest and trial of Eleanor Cobham and accomplices | London                      | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| 20 May 1442        | Lord Talbot created Earl of Shrewsbury             | Paris                       | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 23 Apr 1445        | Marriage of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou         | Titchfield, Hampshire       | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| 23 Feb 1447        | Death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester              | Bury St. Edmunds            | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| 11 Apr 1447        | Death of Cardinal Beaufort                         | Winchester                  | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| 2 May 1450         | Death of Earl of Suffolk                           | English Channel             | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| Jun–Jul 1450       | Rebellion of Jack Cade                             | Kent and London             | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| Spring 1452        | Richard, Duke of York, marches on London           | London                      | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |
| 17 Jul 1453        | Death of Lord Talbot at battle of Cantillon        | Cantillon, Gascony          | <i>1 Henry VI</i>   |
| 22 May 1455        | First battle of St. Albans                         | St. Albans, Hertfordshire   | <i>2 Henry VI</i>   |

| <b><i>Date</i></b>        | <b><i>Event</i></b>                                    | <b><i>Location</i></b>      | <b><i>Play</i></b>   |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 10 Jul 1460               | Battle of Northampton                                  | Northampton                 | [3 <i>Henry VI</i> ] |
| Oct 1460                  | Richard, Duke of York, holds Parliament                | London                      | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 30 Dec 1460               | Battle of Wakefield                                    | Wakefield, Yorkshire        | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 2 Feb 1461                | Battle of Mortimer's Cross                             | Near Wigmore, Herefordshire | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 29 Mar 1461               | Battle of Towton                                       | Near Tadcaster, Yorkshire   | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 28 Jun 1461               | Coronation of Edward IV                                | Westminster Abbey           | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 1 May 1464                | Marriage of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville          | Northamptonshire            | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| Jul 1465                  | Henry VI captured                                      | Lancashire                  | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 26 Jul 1469               | Battle of Edgecote Moor                                | Near Banbury, Oxfordshire   | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| Oct 1470–Apr/<br>May 1471 | Readeption (restoration) of Henry VI                   | London                      | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 14 Apr 1471               | Battle of Barnet; death of Warwick                     | Barnet, near London         | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 4 May 1471                | Battle of Tewkesbury; death of Edward, Prince of Wales | Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 21 May 1471               | Death of Henry VI                                      | Tower of London             | 3 <i>Henry VI</i>    |
| 12 Jul 1472               | Marriage of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to Anne       | Westminster Abbey           | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| 18 Feb 1478               | Death of Duke of Clarence                              | Tower of London             | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| 9 Apr 1483                | Death of Edward IV                                     | Westminster                 | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| Jun 1483                  | Death of Lord Hastings                                 | Tower of London             | <i>Richard III</i>   |

| <b><i>Date</i></b> | <b><i>Event</i></b>                             | <b><i>Location</i></b>                            | <b><i>Play</i></b>   |
|--------------------|---|---|----------------------|
| 6 Jul 1483         | Coronation of Richard III                       | Westminster Abbey                                 | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| 2 Nov 1483         | Death of Duke of Buckingham                     | Salisbury   | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| 16 Mar 1485        | Death of Queen Anne                             | Westminster                                       | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| 22 Aug 1485        | Battle of Bosworth Field                        | Leicestershire                                    | <i>Richard III</i>   |
| 30 Oct 1485        | Coronation of Henry VII                         | Westminster Abbey                                 | <i>[Richard III]</i> |
| 18 Jan 1486        | Marriage of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York     | Westminster Abbey                                 | <i>[Richard III]</i> |
| Jun 1520           | Meeting of Henry VIII and Francis I             | "Field of the Cloth of Gold," near Calais, France | <i>[Henry VIII]</i>  |
| 17 May 1521        | Death of Duke of Buckingham                     | Tower Hill, London                                | <i>Henry VIII</i>    |
| 29 Nov 1530        | Death of Wolsey                                 | Leicester   | <i>Henry VIII</i>    |
| 25 Jan 1533        | Marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Bullen (Boleyn) | Whitehall   | <i>Henry VIII</i>    |
| 1 Jun 1533         | Coronation of Anne Bullen (Boleyn)              | Westminster Abbey                                 | <i>Henry VIII</i>    |
| 7 Sep 1533         | Birth of Princess Elizabeth                     | Greenwich Palace                                  | <i>Henry VIII</i>    |
| 10 Sep 1533        | Christening of Princess Elizabeth               | Greenwich Palace                                  | <i>Henry VIII</i>    |

## FURTHER READING AND VIEWING

### CRITICAL APPROACHES

Barber, C. L., “Rule and Misrule in *Henry IV*,” in his *Shakespeare’s Festive Comedy* (1959). Superb linking to the “festive” world.

Bloom, Harold, ed., *Modern Critical Interpretations: William Shakespeare’s Henry IV, Part 1* (1987). Extracts from strong twentieth-century critical approaches.

Bristol, Michael D., *Carnival and Theater: Plebeian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England* (1985). Provocative Marxist reading.

Bulman, James, “*Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare’s History Plays*, ed. Michael Hattaway (2002), pp. 158–76. Sensible overview.

Greenblatt, Stephen, “Invisible Bullets: Renaissance Authority and Its Subversion, *Henry IV and Henry V*,” in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (1985), pp. 18–47. Hugely influential “new historicist” reading. Reprinted in Greenblatt’s *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988).

Hodgdon, Barbara, *The End Crowns All: Closure and Contradiction in Shakespeare’s History* (1991). Strong on structure.

Hunter, G. K., ed., *Shakespeare: Henry IV Parts I and II*, Macmillan Casebook series (1970). Invaluable selection of earlier criticism.

Kastan, David Scott, “‘The King Hath Many Marching in His Coats,’ or, What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?,” in *Shakespeare Left and*

*Right*, ed. Ivo Kamps (1991), pp. 241–58. Good focus on politics, duplicity, and kingship.

McAlindon, Tom, *Shakespeare's Tudor History: A Study of Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* (2000). Excellent account of critical history and cultural context, with good close reading.

McLoughlin, Cathleen T., *Shakespeare, Rabelais, and the Comical-Historical* (2000). Fascinating intertextual reading of *Henry IV* plays with Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.

Morgann, Maurice, *An Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff* (1777, repr. 2004). Gloriously humane character criticism from the eighteenth century. Also freely available online, e.g., at [www.19.5degs.com/ebook/essay-the-dramatic-character-of-sir-john-falstaff/466/read#list](http://www.19.5degs.com/ebook/essay-the-dramatic-character-of-sir-john-falstaff/466/read#list)

Patterson, Annabel, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (1989) and *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (1994). Two books that should be read as a pair.

Rackin, Phyllis, *Stages of History: Shakespeare's English Chronicles* (1990). Attentive to women and social inferiors as well as kings and nobles.

Rossiter, A. P., "Ambivalence: The Dialectic of the History Plays," in his *Angel with Horns: Fifteen Lectures on Shakespeare* (1961). Still one of the best things written on the play.

Saccio, Peter, *Shakespeare's English Kings* (1977). The best practical guide to the relationship between actual historical events in the Middle Ages, the Tudor chronicles, and Shakespeare's dramatic reshaping of history.

Wood, Nigel, ed., *Henry IV Parts One and Two* (1995). Sophisticated collection of theoretically informed essays—not for beginners.

## THE PLAY IN PERFORMANCE

Bogdanov, Michael, and Michael Pennington, *The English Shakespeare Company: the Story of the Wars of the Roses, 1986–1989* (1990). Insiders' account.

- Callow, Simon, *Actors on Shakespeare: Henry IV Part 1* (2002). Takes the reader through the play “from the point of view of the practitioner”—lucid, intelligent, readable account.
- McMillin, Scott, *Shakespeare in Performance: Henry IV Part One* (1991). Discussion of five important modern productions, up to English Shakespeare Company, plus films.
- Merlin, Bella, *With the Rogue’s Company: Henry IV at the National Theatre* (2005). Detailed account of Nicholas Hytner’s production.
- Parsons, Keith, and Pamela Mason, eds., *Shakespeare in Performance* (1995). Includes a useful essay on both parts of *Henry IV* by Janet Clare—luxuriously illustrated.
- Smallwood, Robert, ed., *Players of Shakespeare 6* (2004). Includes illuminating discussions by David Troughton on playing Bullingbrook/Henry IV and Desmond Barrit on Falstaff.
- Wharton, T. F., *Text and Performance: Henry the Fourth Parts 1 & 2* (1983). A good basic introduction to the play and detailed discussions of three RSC productions and the BBC television version.

## AVAILABLE ON DVD

- Chimes at Midnight*, directed by Orson Welles (1965, DVD 2000). Condenses all the Falstaff material from both parts of *Henry IV* plus *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Multi-award nominated, with a star-studded cast, as eccentric and brilliant as Welles’ own performance as Falstaff. One of the all-time classic Shakespeare films.
- Henry the Fourth Parts 1 and 2*, directed by David Giles (1979, DVD 2005). Somewhat pedestrian account for the BBC series. Anthony Quayle’s Falstaff stands out.
- Henry V*, directed by Kenneth Branagh (1989, DVD 2002). Incorporated some flashback scenes from *Henry IV* with Robbie Coltrane as Falstaff.

*My Own Private Idaho*, directed by Gus Van Sant (1991, DVD 2005). Loosely based on the Hal–Falstaff relationship. Stars River Phoenix and Keanu Reeves as a pair of gay hustlers.

*The Wars of the Roses*, directed by Michael Bogdanov (1989, DVD 2005). Recording of English Shakespeare Company's eclectic and highly political stage production.



## REFERENCES

1. Scott McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance: Henry IV, Part One* (1991), p. 1.
2. A reference to *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth* or *Henry V* in Nicholas Breton's *A Post with a Packet of Mad Letters* (Part I, 1603).
3. James Wright, *Historia Historionica* (1699).
4. Colley Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Mr Colley Cibber* (1740), p. 87.
5. Thomas Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies* (1784, repr. 1971), pp. 124–8.
6. Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, pp. 127–8.
7. Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, pp. 136–41.
8. Davies, *Dramatic Miscellanies*, p. 153.
9. Davies Laurence Selenick, *The Changing Room: Sex, Drag and Theatre* (2000), p. 270.
10. William Hazlitt, *Examiner*, 13 October 1816.
11. *The Athenaeum*, No. 902, 8 February 1845, p. 158.
12. Harold Child, “The Stage-History of *King Henry IV*,” in *The First Part of the History of Henry IV*, ed. J. Dover Wilson (1946), pp. xxix–xlvi.
13. *Theatrical Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 346, 1 August 1846, pp. 243–4.
14. Henry Morley, diary entry for 14 May 1864 in *The Journal of a London Playgoer from 1851 to 1866* (1866), pp. 330–9.
15. Morley, diary entry for 1 October 1864, pp. 344–5.

16. William Archer, *The Theatrical "World" of 1896* (1897, repr. 1971), pp. 141–50.
17. *The Athenaeum*, No. 3577, 16 May 1896, p. 659.
18. G. B. Shaw, *The Saturday Review*, London, Vol. 81, No. 2116, 16 May 1896, pp. 500–2.
19. William Butler Yeats, "At Stratford-upon-Avon" (1901), in his *Essays and Introductions* (1961), p. 97.
20. Herbert Farjeon, "King Henry the Fourth—Part I: Mr Robey's Falstaff," in his *The Shakespearean Scene: Dramatic Criticisms* (1949), p. 92.
21. Child, "The Stage-History of *King Henry IV*," pp. xxix–xlvi.
22. Stephen Potter, *New Statesman and Nation*, 6 October 1945, p. 227.
23. Audrey Williamson, "The New Triumvirate (1944–47)," in her *Old Vic Drama: A Twelve Years' Study of Plays and Players* (1948), pp. 172–212.
24. Anthony Quayle, in a foreword to *Shakespeare's Histories at Stratford, 1951*, by J. Dover Wilson and T. C. Worsley (1970).
25. T. C. Worsley, *New Statesman and Nation*, 3 November 1951, pp. 489–90.
26. T. C. Worsley, *Shakespeare's Histories at Stratford, 1951* (1970), p. 31.
27. Worsley, *New Statesman and Nation*, 3 November 1951, pp. 489–90.
28. T. C. Worsley, *New Statesman and Nation*, 7 May 1955, p. 646.
29. Eric Keown, *Punch*, 11 May 1955, pp. 593–4.
30. Michael Bogdanov and Michael Pennington, *The English Shakespeare Company: The Story of the Wars of the Roses, 1986–1989* (1990), pp. 28–9, quoted in Barbara Hodgdon, *Shakespeare in Performance: Henry IV, Part Two* (1993), pp. 124–5.
31. Donald Malcolm, *New Yorker*, 30 April 1960, pp. 86–9.

32. Ben Brantley, *New York Times Current Events Edition*, 23 December 1993.
33. Ben Brantley, *New York Times*, 21 November 2003.
34. Paul Taylor, *Independent*, 6 May 2005.
35. Taylor, *Independent*, 6 May 2005.
36. Taylor, *Independent*, 6 May 2005.
37. McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 88.
38. McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 95.
39. McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 100.
40. Ronald Bryden, "The Education of a King," *Henry IV Parts 1 & 2*, RSC Programme notes, 1980.
41. McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 86.
42. McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 86.
43. T. F. Wharton, *Henry the Fourth, Parts 1 & 2: Text and Performance* (1983).
44. David Scott Kastan, ed., Introduction, in *King Henry IV Part 1*, Arden Shakespeare (2002).
45. Stanley Wells, *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 May 1991.
46. Michael Billington, *Guardian*, 18 April 1991.
47. John Peter, *Sunday Times*, London, 21 April 2001.
48. Desmond Barrit, "Falstaff," in Robert Smallwood, ed., *Players of Shakespeare 6* (2004).
49. Nicholas de Jongh, *Evening Standard*, 20 April 2000.
50. Michael Billington, *Guardian*, 21 April 2000.
51. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Second Part, 29.
52. Harold C. Goddard, "Henry IV," in Harold Bloom, ed., *William Shakespeare: Histories and Poems* (1986).
53. Goddard, "Henry IV."
54. *Listener*, 3 July 1975.
55. Kastan, *King Henry IV Part 1*, p. 97.

56. Emrys James, "On Playing Henry IV," *Theatre Quarterly*, Vol. 7, 1977.
57. W. Stephen Gilbert, *Plays and Players*, Vol. 22, No. 10, 1975.
58. Gilbert, *Plays and Players*.
59. Michael Coveney, *Daily Mail*, 21 April 2000.
60. McMillin, *Shakespeare in Performance*, p. 42.
61. Wharton, *Henry the Fourth, Parts 1 & 2*.
62. Stanley Wells, *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 May 1991.
63. David Troughton, "Bolingbroke in Richard II, and King Henry IV," in Smallwood, *Players of Shakespeare* 6.
64. Troughton, "Bolingbroke in Richard II, and King Henry IV."
65. Troughton, "Bolingbroke in Richard II, and King Henry IV."
66. Robert Smallwood, *Critical Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Spring, 1983.
67. Billington, *Guardian*, 21 April 2000.
68. Troughton, "Bolingbroke in Richard II, and King Henry IV."
69. Bryden, "The Education of a King."
70. Goddard, "Henry IV," p. 33.
71. James, "On Playing Henry IV."
72. Billington, *Guardian*, 21 April 2000.
73. John Peter, *Sunday Times*, 30 April 2000.
74. Troughton, "Bolingbroke in Richard II, and King Henry IV."
75. Kastan, *King Henry IV Part 1*, p. 102.
76. Peter, *Sunday Times*, 21 April 2001.
77. Irving Wardle, *Independent on Sunday*, 21 April 2001.
78. Billington, *Guardian*, 18 April 2001.
79. Michel de Montaigne, *Essays* (trans. Florio, 1603), pp. 1, 30.
80. Unsigned review, *The Times*, London, 17 April 1964.
81. Wharton, *Henry the Fourth Parts 1 & 2*.

82. David E. Jones, *Drama Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 1965.
83. Wharton, *Henry the Fourth, Parts 1 & 2*, p. 67.
84. Wharton, *Henry the Fourth, Parts 1 & 2*.
85. Desmond Barrit, "Falstaff."
86. Charles Spencer, *Daily Telegraph*, 21 April 2000.
87. Peter Davison, "Henry IV," in Mark Hawkins-Dady, ed., *International Dictionary of Theatre—1: Plays* (1992).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND PICTURE

### CREDITS

Preparation of “*Henry IV* in Performance” was assisted by a generous grant from the CAPITAL Centre (Creativity and Performance in Teaching and Learning) of the University of Warwick for research in the RSC archive at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded a term’s research leave that enabled Jonathan Bate to work on “The Director’s Cut.”

Picture research by Michelle Morton. Grateful acknowledgment is made to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust for assistance with picture research (special thanks to Helen Hargest) and reproduction fees.

Images of RSC productions are supplied by the Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive, Stratford-upon-Avon. This Library, maintained by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, holds the most important collection of Shakespeare material in the UK, including the Royal Shakespeare Company’s official archive. It is open to the public free of charge.

For more information see [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk).

1. Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1896) Reproduced by permission of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
2. Ralph Richardson and Laurence Olivier (1945) John Vickers courtesy of the University of Bristol Theatre Collection
3. Directed by John Kidd and Anthony Quayle (1951) Angus McBean © Royal Shakespeare Company

4. Directed by Terry Hands (1975) Joe Cocks Studio Collection © Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
5. Directed by Michael Attenborough (2000) John Haynes © Royal Shakespeare Company
6. Directed by Michael Bogdanov (1987) © Donald Cooper/[photostage.co.uk](http://photostage.co.uk)
7. Directed by Michael Boyd (2007) Ellie Kurttz © Royal Shakespeare Company
8. Directed by Adrian Noble (1991) Joe Cocks Studio Collection © Shakespeare Birthplace Trust
9. Directed by Michael Boyd (2007) Ellie Kurttz © Royal Shakespeare Company
10. Reconstructed Elizabethan Playhouse © Charcoalblue

THE MODERN LIBRARY EDITORIAL BOARD

Maya Angelou

•

A. S. Byatt

•

Caleb Carr

•

Christopher Cerf

•

Harold Evans

•

Charles Frazier

•

Vartan Gregorian

•

Jessica Hagedorn

•

Richard Howard

•

Charles Johnson

•

Jon Krakauer

•

Edmund Morris

•

Azar Nafisi

•

Joyce Carol Oates

•

Elaine Pagels

•

John Richardson

•

Salman Rushdie



•  
Oliver Sacks

•  
Carolyn See

•  
Gore Vidal

The Modern Library presents paperback editions of individual Shakespeare plays from

**The Royal Shakespeare Company**

With new commentary, as well as definitive text and cutting-edge notes from the RSC's *William Shakespeare: Complete Works*, the first authoritative, modernized edition of Shakespeare's First Folio in more than 300 years.



Antony and Cleopatra



King Lear



Macbeth



Hamlet



Love's Labour's Lost



A Midsummer Night's Dream



The Sonnets and Other Poems



The Winter's Tale



Richard III



The Tempest

Also available in hardcover  
*William Shakespeare: Complete Works*



"Timely, original, and beautifully conceived . . . a remarkable edition."  
—James Shapiro, professor, Columbia University, bestselling author of *A Year in the Life of Shakespeare: 1599*



Visit [www.therscshakespeare.com](http://www.therscshakespeare.com) to learn more about these titles from The Royal Shakespeare Company

# MODERN LIBRARY IS ONLINE AT **WWW.MODERNLIBRARY.COM**

---

MODERN LIBRARY ONLINE IS YOUR GUIDE  
TO CLASSIC LITERATURE ON THE WEB

## THE MODERN LIBRARY E-NEWSLETTER

Our free e-mail newsletter is sent to subscribers, and features sample chapters, interviews with and essays by our authors, upcoming books, special promotions, announcements, and news. To subscribe to the Modern Library e-newsletter, visit **www.modernlibrary.com**

## THE MODERN LIBRARY WEBSITE

Check out the Modern Library website at  
**www.modernlibrary.com** for:

- The Modern Library e-newsletter
- A list of our current and upcoming titles and series
- Reading Group Guides and exclusive author spotlights
- Special features with information on the classics and other paperback series
- Excerpts from new releases and other titles
- A list of our e-books and information on where to buy them
- The Modern Library Editorial Board's 100 Best Novels and 100 Best Nonfiction Books of the Twentieth Century written in the English language
- News and announcements

Questions? E-mail us at **modernlibrary@randomhouse.com**.  
For questions about examination or desk copies, please visit  
the Random House Academic Resources site at  
**www.randomhouse.com/academic**

Introduction copyright © 2007, 2009 by The Royal Shakespeare Company

All rights reserved.

Published in the United States by Modern Library, an imprint of The Random House Publishing Group, a division of Random House, Inc., New York.

MODERN LIBRARY and the TORCHBEARER

“Royal Shakespeare Company,” “RSC,” and the RSC logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Royal Shakespeare Company.

The version of *Henry IV: Part I* and the corresponding footnotes that appear in this volume were originally published in *William Shakespeare: Complete Works*, edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, published in 2007 by Modern Library, an imprint of The Random House Publishing Group, a division of Random House, Inc.

eISBN: 978-1-58836-844-7

[www.modernlibrary.com](http://www.modernlibrary.com)

v3.0

1 **we** i.e. the king/the nation as a whole

wan pale, sickly

2 Find **we** let us find

frighted frightened



3 breathe short-winded accents speak while out of breath

**broils** quarrels, fighting

4 strands afar remote distant shores

5 entrance mouth

6 daub smear, plaster



8 flow'rets small flowers

**armèd** ironshod/armored



9 **paces** (horse's) tread/ gallop

**opposèd** hostile, malevolent

10 **meteors** regarded as bad omens

12 intestine shock internal, domestic military encounter

## 13 **close** hand-to-hand fighting

14 mutual well-beseeming united and ordered

19 **sepulchre of Christ** Christ's tomb (at Jerusalem; Henry is planning a crusade to the Holy Land)





**engaged** pledged, committed



levy raise, muster

23 **arms** upper limbs/weapons

**mother's** natural mother's/England's



25 **blessèd feet** i.e. Christ's

27 **bitter** painful/pitiable







**cousin** kinsman

32 yesternight last night

33 dear important/urgent/noble/costly

**expedience** expedition

34 **liege** lord, superior to whom feudal service was due

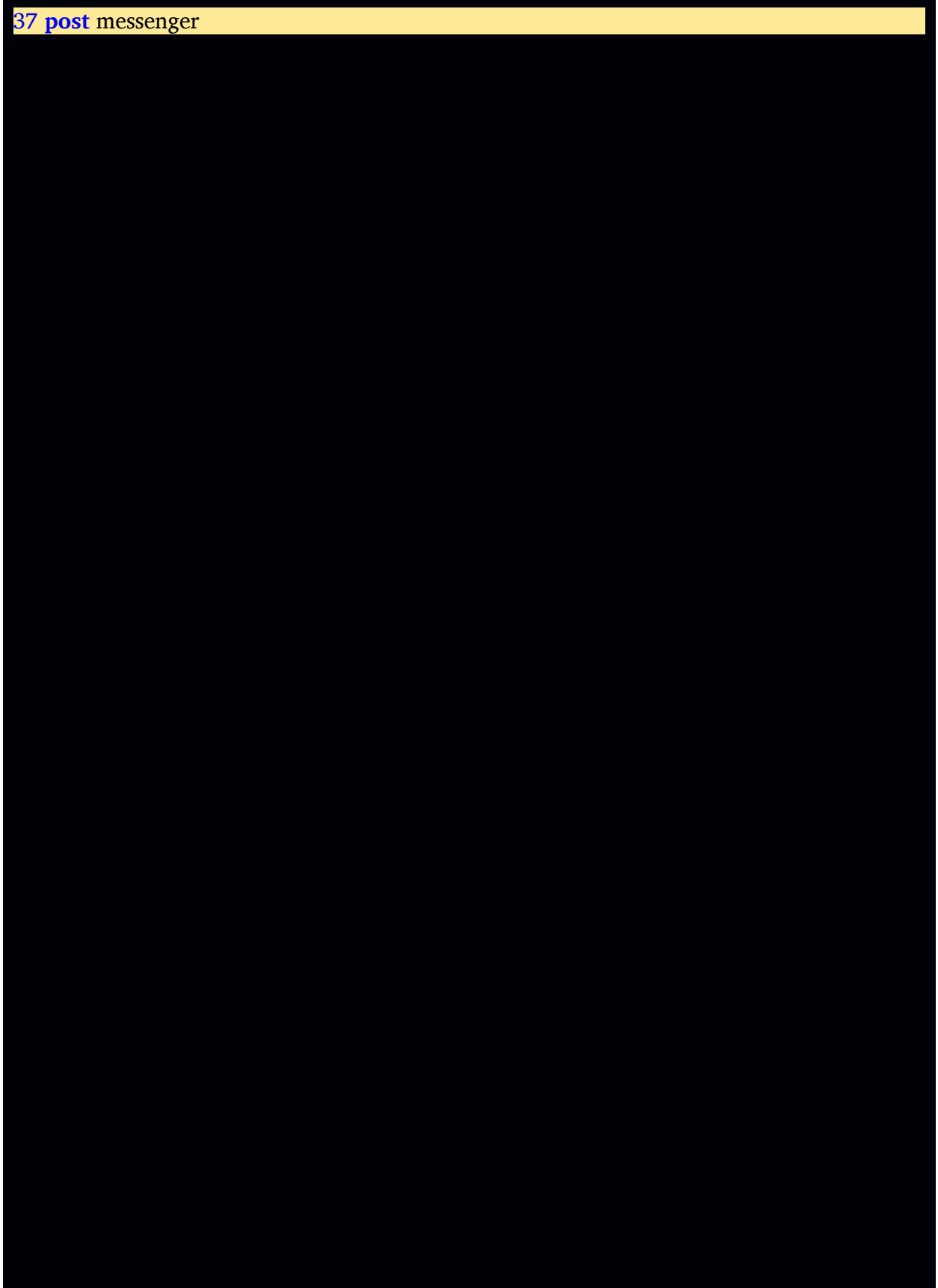
hot in question hotly debated



35 **limits...charge** responsibilities relating to the undertaking

36 But only, as recently as

athwart adversely, at odds with our business



**loaden** weighed down

heavy sad/weighty

40 irregular...Glendower uncivilized guerrilla fighter

**Glendower** was leader of the Welsh rebels)



41 **rude** rough







48 **Brake** archaic past tense of “break”

49 **matched with** together with, accompanied by



52 Holy Rood day 14 September, dedicated to the cross **rood**) of Christ



**Hotspur** Henry Percy's nickname suggests that he is vigorous, hasty, and hotheaded

54 **approved** tried and tested (in battle)



56 **sad** serious/leading to sorrow

58 shape of likelihood likely conjecture

59 **heat...contention** middle of the fiercest fighting

61 **issue** outcome

any either



62 **Here** either “here at court” or a line indicating Blunt’s presence among the “other” lords in attendance onstage

63 new lighted only just dismounted

64 **variation of each** different types of



seat residence/throne

66 smooth pleasant, welcome

67 **discomfited** defeated

69 **Balked** heaped up (in “balks,” i.e. ridges)



71 Mordake...Douglas Mordake was

**Earl of Fife** but not Douglas' son—Shakespeare misread Holinshed's *Chronicles*, his main source

73 **Menteith** not in fact another earl, but one of Mordake's titles



75 **gallant** fine, splendid

80 **theme** subject, chief topic

81 straightest plant most upright tree







86 **night-tripping** moving nimbly through the night

**fairy** popular belief held that fairies sometimes stole human infants, substituting (troublesome) fairy children for them

88 **Plantagenet** the surname of this royal dynasty

90 **from** go from

**coz** short for “cousin” (i.e. kinsman)



**surprised** captured, ambushed



97 **prune** preen (like a bird

**bristle** raise, ruffle angrily



100 **cause** reason

106 out...utterèd can be spoken openly in anger

2 **fat-witted** dull-witted (plays on Falstaff's physical size

sack Spanish white wine

4 **forgotten** neglected/forgotten how



5 demand that truly ask accurately, rightly

**truly** genuinely/accurately

7 **capons** castrated cockerels, a common dish

8 **bawds** pimps, procurers of sex

**dials** sundials/clock faces

leaping-houses brothels



10 **taffeta** silky material associated with prostitutes



**superfluous** unnecessarily curious, irrelevant

12 **come near me** touch the point, begin to understand me

13 go by travel by the light of/tell the time according to

**seven stars** the Pleiades (a group of stars in the constellation Taurus)



## 14 Phoebus the sun god

'wand'ring...fair' probably a phrase from a ballad or popular romance, referring to the sun as a knight in a tale of romance

15 wag mischievous boy

**grace** term of address for royalty (but sense then shifts to “spiritual grace” and then to “prayer before a meal”)



19 egg and butter i.e. a very light meal (barely requiring **grace** to be said as a blessing)

20 **roundly** plainly, straightforwardly (may play on Falstaff's shape)



22 **squires...body** the night's personal attendants

night's puns on "knight's"

thieves...beauty i.e. by sleepily wasting the day

beauty puns on “booty”)

23 **Diana** Roman goddess of the moon, patron of hunting and virginity



**foresters** forest dwellers, servants



of good government of good conduct/who live under a good ruler

26 **countenance** face, appearance/support, authority

27 **steal** rob/move furtively

28 **holds** applies, is apt

33 'Lay by' highwayman's command that his victims lay aside their weapons

34 **'Bring in'** an order for drinks



**now...gallows** one moment one's fortune is as low as the bottom of the ladder leading to the gallows, the next as high as the crossbar at the top of the gallows—i.e. whatever a thief's course, the result (hanging) is the same



38 Hybla Sicilian town famous for its honey

**old...castle** carouser (plays on “Oldcastle,” Shakespeare’s original name for Falstaff;

**castle** may play on the sense of “stocks,” instruments of public punishment in which a thief might be confined; a London brothel called the Castle may also be alluded to, appropriately named given that **castle** was slang for “vagina”)

39 **buff jerkin** tight leather jacket worn by sheriff's officers (plays on the sense of "naked vagina")

**robe of durance** long-lasting garment (with sexual connotations; **durance** plays on the sense of “imprisonment”)





**What a plague** emphatic form of “what”



45 called...reck'ning asked her for the bill/asked her to explain herself/had sex with her

47 **pay thy part** pay for your share/have sex

49 coin would stretch money would go/penis would grow;

**coin** puns on “quoin”—i.e. carpenter’s wedge (a euphemism for “penis”)

52 **heir** puns on

[here](#) (which was pronounced in a similar manner)





fobbed cheated

**curb** restraint (literally, chain passed under a horse's jaw

old father antic the elderly buffoon (that is)



**brave** fine, excellent

62 jumps...humour fits my disposition

63 **waiting** waiting around/being in attendance



64 **suits** requests, legal petitions (Falstaff plays on the sense of “suits of clothes”; the hangman had the right to keep his victims’ garments)

66 **no lean wardrobe** i.e. no small amount (because hangings were common;

**wardrobe** may pun on “wardrope,” a type of thick rope

**gib cat** tom cat?

67 **lugged bear** baited bear, pulled by the ears and tugged on a chain

68 lute the stringed instrument was associated with lovers

69 **bagpipe** musical instrument/tedious, moaning speaker

70 hare a proverbially melancholy animal

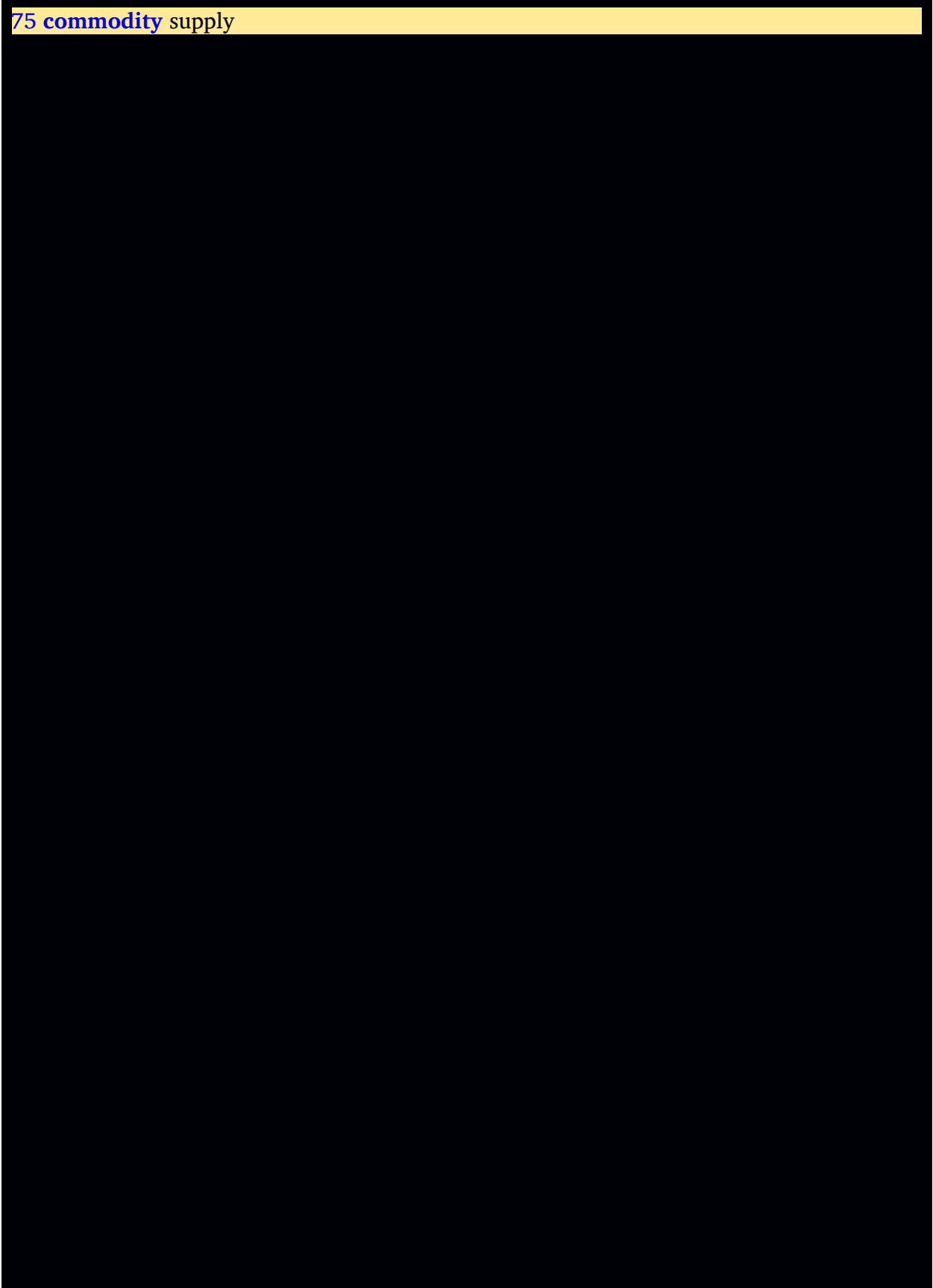


71 **Moorditch** notoriously filthy drainage ditch outside the northern walls of the City of London

73 **comparative** prone to making comparisons

rascalli'st most rascal-like





**names** reputations

76 **rated** scolded

77 **marked him not** took no notice of him



80 **no...it** biblical allusion, “Wisdom crieth without...and no man regarded” (Proverbs 1:20–4), truncated in Folio because of the 1606 Parliamentary “Act to restrain the Abuses of Players”

81 **damnable iteration** a way of constantly quoting Scripture that will lead to damnation

82 **saint** puritan term for a person chosen by God to be saved



87 never a no

88 **Jack** affectionate form of “John”

89 **make one** make up one of the party

90 **baffle** publicly disgrace (a knight) me.







95 **Gadshill** named after Gad's Hill in Kent, a notorious place for highway robberies

**set a watch** surveyed the targeted area, conducted a recce (as part of planning a robbery; some editors emend to “set a match”—slang for “plan a robbery”

**saved by merit** had their souls saved through good works and personal desert (as opposed to divine grace)



**Stand** stand and deliver—highwayman's command

true honest



100 **Monsieur Remorse** teasing reference to Falstaff

101 **Sir...Jack** i.e. Falstaff; another mocking reference, apparently alluding to Falstaff's taste for sweetened wine

103 **Good Friday** the Friday before Easter Sunday, a strict fast day

**Madeira** a strong white wine



110 Else he had Otherwise he had been

cozening cheating

112 **Gad's Hill** the notorious spot for robberies was situated on the Dover road near



**Rochester** in Kent; pilgrims traveling to

Canterbury were often targets





bespoke ordered

116 **Eastcheap** London street running from the junction of Cannon and Gracechurch streets to Great Tower Street

secure safely

117 crowns gold coins





119 Yedward dialect form of “Edward”

120 **hang you** i.e. report it and get you hanged

121 **chops** fat cheeks

125 **blood royal** regal descent (Falstaff goes on to play on the sense of “gold coin worth

ten shillings”)

126 **stand for** stand and fight for/be worth

135 **Well...believed** Falstaff parodies the language of a Protestant sermon on the power of God's word to move the congregation





139 **want countenance** lack recognition and support

141 **latter...summer** late spring and summer lasting until All Hallows' Eve (31 October); the suggestion is that Falstaff's youthful behavior is not in keeping with his age!

146 **waylaid** set an ambush for



**fail** i.e. to turn up

155 like likely





**appointment** piece of gear

160 **sirrah** sir (familiar form often used to inferiors, jocular here

cases of buckram suits of coarse cloth

**nonce** purpose, occasion

[immask](#) disguise





**hard** tough, powerful



164 **turned back** turned their backs to flee

165 forswear swear to give up



168 **wards** defensive maneuvers (fencing term)

169 **reproof** disproving, refutation/shame, reprimand

173 **sup** have supper (the last meal of the day)

175 **uphold** carry on with/support

176 **unyoked humour** unrestrained behavior, wild whim



177 **sun** common symbol of royalty

178 **contagious** noxious, infectious;

clouds were thought to harbor disease

181 **wanted** missed, lacked

185 **sport** play, entertain oneself

187 rare accidents unusual events

191 falsify men's hopes prove expectations of me false

192 **sullen ground** dark background



195 foil contrast, background (technically, setting for a jewel)

196 **so offend** misbehave in such a way

skill art/cunning tactic



Redeeming has religious connotations)

1 **temperate** calm, restrained

2 **Unapt** not inclined or ready to

3 found me found me to be so



4 **tread upon** try, take advantage of

5 myself my royal self

6 **condition** natural disposition



9 **proud** fine, splendid, possessed of self-respect

10 **house** family

11 scourge punishing whip

13 [help](#) helped



**portly** prosperous, majestic/overweight, too comfortable

17 **peremptory** determined/imperious

19 **moody frontier** threatening look

**frontier** literally, military fortification

20 **good leave** full permission



26 with...denied refused so emphatically

27 delivered reported



28 **envy or misprision** malice or misunderstanding

32 **dry with rage** thirsty after the fury of battle



trimly finely, immaculately

35 new reaped freshly shaven

36 stubble-land at harvest-home shorn stalks of crops at the end of the harvest

37 **milliner** seller of fancy goods (originally those from Milan)

39 **poucet-box** small box with a perforated lid, used for holding perfume or snuff



ever and anon time and again

40 gave held up to

41 Who therewith angry at which (removal of the box) his nose became angry

42 Took...snuff inhaled/took offense

still continually

44 **untaught** ignorant, ill-mannered

45 **slovenly** dirty, untidy

**unhandsome** unattractive, unbecoming



46 **nobility** elegant, aristocratic personage



48 **questioned** conversed with/asked questions of

50 **cold** untended/congealing

51 **popinjay** parrot (i.e. gaudy prattler)

53 **neglectingly** unthinkingly, carelessly



56 **waiting-gentlewoman** woman of good family attending on a great lady



57 **God...mark!** conventional expression of apology

58 sovereign'st best, most healing

59 **parmaceti** corruption of “spermaceti”—fat from the head of a sperm whale, used for treating bruises

61 **saltpetre** potassium nitrate, the chief ingredient of gunpowder, also used medicinally

63 tall fine, valiant

66 **bald unjointed chat** empty, incoherent chatter







69 Come current be accepted at face value





76 **impeach** discredit, accuse

77 so provided that

78 yet he still Hotspur (the king does not reply to him directly

**deny** refuse (to hand over)





80 charge expense

straight straightaway

85 Earl of March i.e.

**Mortimer**; in fact, Shakespeare confuses two Edmund Mortimers: one was indeed the Earl of March, but it was his uncle of the same name who married Glendower's daughter

86 **coffers** money chests, treasury

88 indent make a contract

**fears** those traitors who give us cause for fear/cowards





95 **fall off** abandon loyalty

98 **mouthèd** open, gaping/famous, spoken of

99 **Severn's sedgy bank** reed-covered bank of the River Severn, which divided England and south Wales

101 **confound** spend, consume

102 **changing hardiment** exchanging valiant blows

103 **breathed** broke off to catch their breath

104 Upon agreement by mutual consent

**flood** water, torrent





107 **crisp** wavy, rippled (personifies the river as curly-haired

**hollow** empty, sunken

109 [base...policy](#) lowly and corrupt plotting





**revolt** i.e. the accusation of being a rebel

114 **belie** misrepresent, lie about



115 encounter fight

116 **durst** (would have) dared



123 [license](#) formally authorize





128 with hazard of at the risk (of losing)





133 **Want mercy** lack God's mercy, i.e. be damned





**cankered** diseased, corrupted

**Bullingbrook** Henry's surname before he was king (taken from the castle in which he was born—Hotspur refuses to acknowledge Henry's royal status)

140 **heat** anger



142 urged pressed, brought forward



144 **eye of death** fearful look, perhaps also threatening





**next of blood** nearest blood relation, i.e. heir to the throne; confusion between the two Mortimers continues—it was in fact the younger man who was proclaimed heir, rather than his uncle (husband of Glendower's daughter and the man who is meant here)



150 in us i.e. at our hands—the Percy family had supported Henry against Richard

152 **intercepted** interrupted (in the middle of his Irish campaign)

156 **soft** wait a moment





160 **cousin** may pun on “cozen” (i.e. “cheat”)

164 blot (moral) stain

165 **subornation** incitement (to Richard's murder)



170 **line** status (plays on the sense of “rope”

**predicament** category/dangerous situation

171 **range** move/are ranked



subtle crafty



178 **canker** wild rose/worm that destroys plants/ulcer

180 **fooled** made fools of/duped, frustrated

186 **studies** reflects, plans, endeavors

187 **answer** repay



192 **quick-conceiving** ready, quick to understand





195 o'er-walk cross



spear i.e. used as a bridge

197 **goodnight** i.e. he's dead

or...swim whether he sinks or swims/he'll either sink or swim

199 So provided

**cross** meet/thwart, oppose



207 **fathom-line** weighted line used for measuring the depth of water



**thence** from there

210 **corrival** rival, competitor

211 out upon away with

**half-faced fellowship** partial, unsatisfactory partnership

212 **apprehends** conceives of, perceives

**figures** images/forms/figures of speech



213 **form** essential principle

attend consider



215 cry you mercy beg your pardon

219 **Scot** puns on the sense of “small payment”



232 still constantly

234 **defy** renounce



235 gall and pinch irritate and torment

236 **sword-and-buckler** weapons associated with servants; a gentleman carried rapier and dagger

**buckler** small shield

237 But that were it not for the fact that

238 **mischance** accident

241 **better...attend** in the right frame of mind to listen

244 **Tying...own** listening to no one but yourself







250 duke his uncle i.e. Edmund of Langley, Duke of York

kept lived



254 **Berkeley Castle** a castle in Gloucestershire, near Bristol

256 **candy deal** sickly sweet (flattering) quantity

258 Look when wait for the time when, as soon as

infant...age i.e. I come into my inheritance



260 **cozeners** deceivers (puns on “cousin”)

263 **stay** await



267 the Douglas' son i.e. Mordake

**mean For powers** agent or means of raising an army

268 **divers** various







276 bears hard takes badly

277 **Lord Scroop** William Scroop, Earl of Wiltshire, executed by Bullingbrook in 1399; in fact the archbishop's cousin

278 **estimation** guessing,

281 *stays* waits

face...occasion i.e. opportunity

283 **smell it** catch the scent, as in hunting

285 **Before...slip** you always release the dogs before the prey has been sighted





290 **aimed** devised, directed



293 **even** steadily, patiently

296 **pay us home** repay us in full/administer a fatal blow

302 suddenly soon

303 **steal** go secretly

304 **at once** all at the same time

305 happily fortunately





1 by the day in the morning

2 **Charles' wain** Charlemagne's wagon, old name for the constellation of the Plow

3 packed loaded

ostler groom at an inn

4 **Anon** soon, in a moment

5 **Tom** presumably the Second Carrier, though possibly the Ostler

beat Cut's saddle beating a saddle would soften it; Cut is the horse's name



**flocks** tufts of wool (for padding)

6 point pommel of saddle

jade worn-out old horse

wrung...withers rubbed sore between the shoulders

[out...cess](#) beyond measure

8 Peas and beans i.e. horses' food

dank...dog damp





house inn

11 joyed was happy

14 **tench** freshwater fish with spots said to resemble fleabites

17 **first cock** first cockcrow, midnight

18 **jordan** chamber pot

19 leak urinate

[chimney](#) fireplace

chamber-lye urine



20 loach small freshwater fish, thought to harbor

fleas

21 Come away come along

23 gammon of bacon ham

**razes** either “races” (roots) or “rasers” (a measure amounting to four bushels)

24 **Charing Cross** village between London and Westminster, site of a market

25 **pannier** one of a pair of baskets

27 An...thee if cracking your skull were not as good a thing as drinking



29 **Hast** have you

**faith** honesty, trustworthiness

31 **two o'clock** either an error, since the First Carrier earlier said that he thought it was four o'clock, or a lie to mislead Gadshill (who may have aroused suspicion)

32 gelding castrated horse

34 I know...that i.e. I'm not so stupid as to fall for such an old trick

37 **Ay...tell?** What time is it? Do you know? (repeating Gadshill's earlier request); or proverbial phrase meaning "you must be joking"

38 **quo**th a did you say

41 Time...candle i.e. sometime tonight





neighbour Mugs i.e. the First Carrier;

**neighbour** is a friendly form of address

call wake

43 **along...charge** want to travel in a group because they're carrying valuable goods

**Chamberlain** inn attendant in charge of the bedrooms

46 At...**pick-purse** I'm ready, as the pickpocket says

47 **That's...fair as** i.e. you might as well have said



49 giving...labouring giving orders does from working

50 lay'st...how devise the plan, direct the thief

51 **current** movement, onward flow

**heady** violent, swiftly moving

52 franklin small landowner

**wild of Kent** Kentish weald, wooded country between the North and South Downs of southern England



**abundance of charge** a lot of baggage



56 eggs and butter i.e. breakfast



58 Saint Nicholas' clerks thieves, highwaymen;

**Saint Nicholas** was supposedly their patron saint

65 **starveling** skinny, starving person

66 **Trojans** fine fellows (slang

the which who





69 **make all whole** put everything right, sort things out

**foot-land rakers** thieves who operate on foot (as opposed to on a horse)

70 **long-staff sixpenny strikers** thieves who, merely to steal sixpence, strike their victims with a long stick

**mustachio purple-hued malt-worms** purple-faced drunkards with large mustaches

71 tranquillity those living a peaceful life

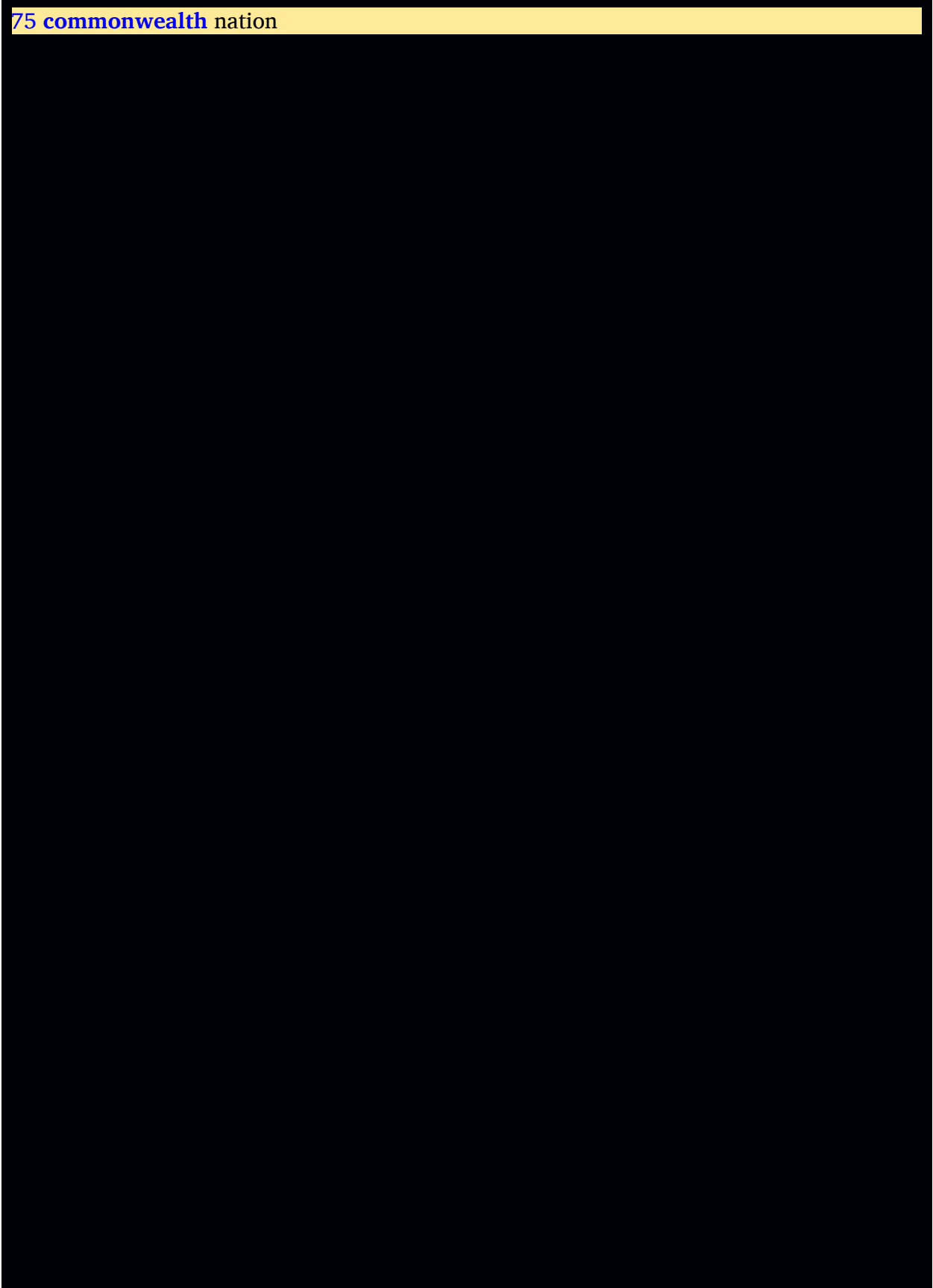


**oneyers** exact meaning uncertain, perhaps “ones,” i.e.

great personages



**hold in** hold firm/keep silent



76 **ride** i.e. like a horse, but also with sexual connotations

77 **boots** booty, plunder (the Chamberlain plays on the sense of “footwear”; there is also a quibble on the sense of “vagina”)

79 hold...way keep you dry on a muddy road/piss herself

80 **liquored** oiled (to make waterproof)/plied with alcohol

81 as...castle i.e. in complete safety

**cocksure** completely secure



**receipt of fern-seed** recipe for fern seed (supposed to confer invisibility)





pupil age youthful time (i.e. the present)

common name to general name for

89 **muddy** muddled, dull-witted (plays on the sense of “dirty”)

2 frets...velvet fusses or, literally, frays like cheap velvet stiffened with gum

3 [close](#) concealed



5 **fat-kidneyed** i.e. fat-bellied

**rascal** may play on the sense of “young or inferior deer,” a creature Falstaff is frequently compared to)

6 keep make, keep up

12 by the square exactly

**square** a measuring instrument

13 **break my wind** lose my breath (plays on the sense of “fart”

**Well...rogue** I expect to die well despite everything, as long as I'm not hanged for killing  
Poins





19 ere before

20 An if

21 **turn true man** reform, become honest/become an informer

**veriest varlet** most complete rogue

26 **Whew!** Expression of alarm or perhaps Falstaff trying to whistle



[colt](#) cheat





36 to i.e. to find, but the prince takes him to mean “to mount”

39 **heir-apparent garters** jokes on the fact that as heir apparent, the prince belonged to the knightly Order of the Garter

40 **peach** turn informer, betray (my accomplices

ballads...all songs made up about you

41 **filthy** disgraceful, obscene

42 **forward** far advanced/presumptuous, immodest

**afoot** when the robbery plot is under way/when I am on foot

45 **setter** one who plans robberies





51 **make us all** make our fortunes





55 light on come upon

56 be are there

60 **Gaunt** plays on the literal sense of “thin” (though actually the name was a form of “Ghent”)





68 **hard** near

69 happy...dole may good fortune be every man's lot

76 [whoreson caterpillars](#) bastard parasites

**whoreson** son of a whore

**bacon-fed** fat, well-fed









80 **chuffs** clowns/ misers

store savings, full possessions

bacons pigs

81 **grand-jurors** wealthy men, eligible to sit on a jury

82 **jure** judge, see to/make a juror of

85 **argument** a topic of conversation









91 **wild duck** i.e. easily frightened

99 **lards** drips fat on

*solus* alone

3 **house** family (Hotspur goes on to play on the literal meaning, contrasting it with barn)

10 **uncertain** unreliable

11 **unsorted** unsuitable





13 hind peasant/menial/nervous female deer



**protest** declare, affirm



18 lord of York the Archbishop of York, Richard Scroop

20 **brain... fan** knock his brains out with a lady's fan—light and suitable for one with little brain

22 **the Douglas** Archibald, Earl of Douglas; **the** signifies the head of a Scottish clan

26 in...of i.e. really motivated by



28 go to buffets come to blows (with myself

moving trying to persuade

**dish...milk** i.e. weak, cowardly one

29 **action** course of action/military enterprise/rhetorical gesture/division in a logical argument

30 prepared drawn up for military action



41 treasures...rights treasured intimacy and wifely rights

42 **thick-eyed** dull-sighted, preoccupied/heavy-lidded (from lack of sleep)



43 **faint** light, restless

watched remained awake







49 **basilisks** large cannon (named after a mythical reptile)

**culverin** another type of large cannon





57 **restrain** hold/catch

59 **heavy** important, weighty

61 What, ho! summons to servant

62 **Gilliams** name of another servant

**packet** packet of letters, dispatch

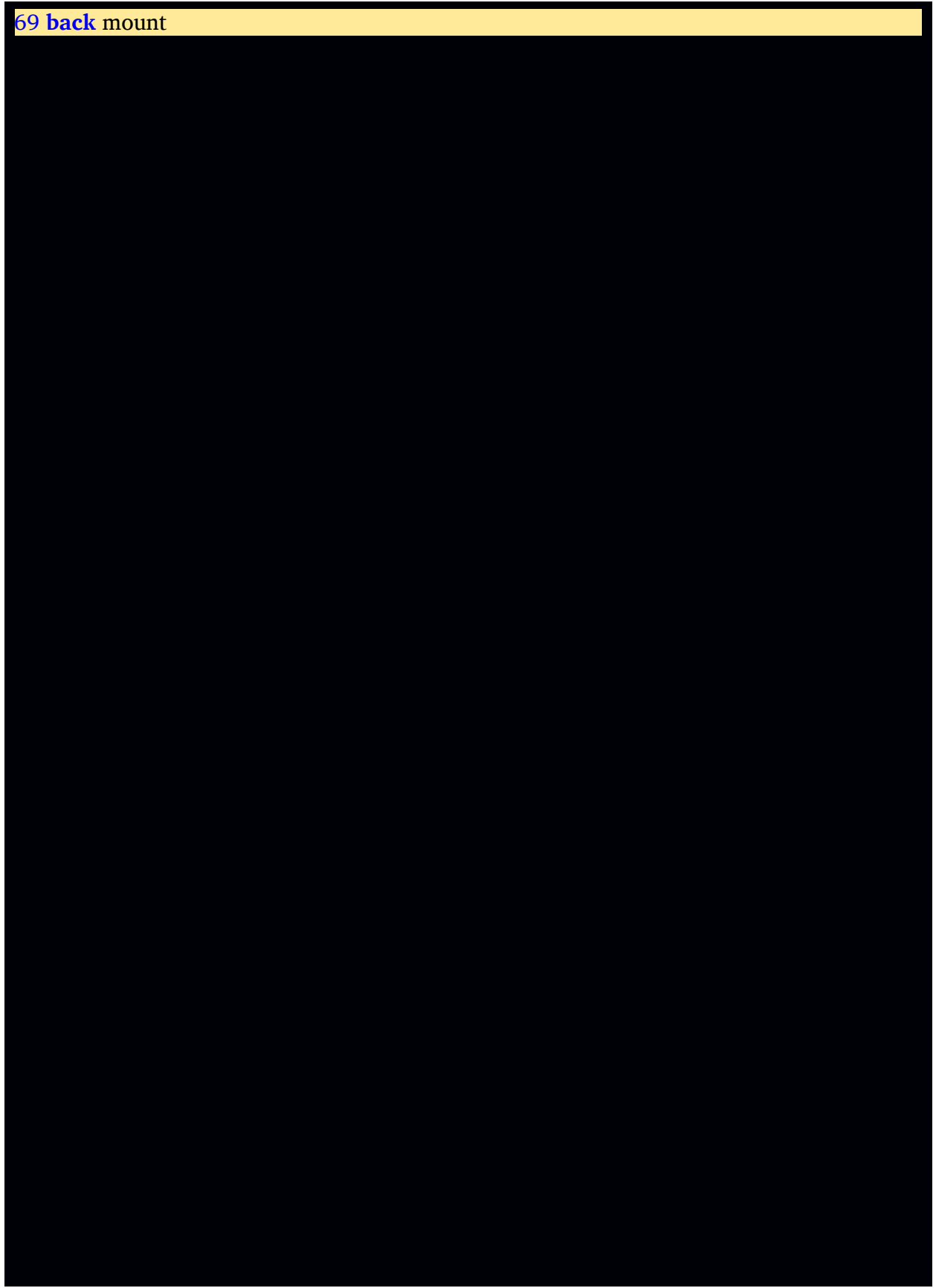


65 even just

66 roan with a coat of mixed color



**crop-ear** with the top of the ears cropped



straight straightaway

**Esperance!** Hope! (the Percy family motto was “*Esperance ma comforte*,” French for “In hope is my strength/ consolation”)

73 carries you away transports you with emotion

76 **weasel** a notoriously aggressive animal (Hotspur responds literally

**spleen** anger, impulsiveness

79 **stir** become roused, rebellious







83 **paraquito** little parrot

85 little finger phallic connotations

88 **trifler** frivolous time-waster

90 **mammets** dolls, perhaps with play on Latin *mamma* (“breasts”



91 **crowns** heads (plays on the sense of “coins” as well as having royal connotations)



92 **pass them current** pass them off as good currency

God's me God save me





108 **closer** more tight-lipped



1 **fat** stuffy (possibly “vat”

[lend...hand](#) help me



4 **loggerheads** blockheads, idiots

**three or fourscore** sixty or eighty (a score is twenty)

5 hogsheads large wine casks

sounded...humility played the lowest note of baseness/ humbleness

6 sworn brother avowed intimate friend

**leash** set of three (usually animals tied together

**drawers** bartenders, waiters

7 **Francis** name of the bartender Hal subsequently teases



10 proud pompous

**Jack** fellow, knave/Jack

**Falstaff** (diminutive version of John

**Corinthian** fine fellow—Corinth in ancient Greece was notorious for riotous living

11 **mettle** spirit, worth

13 **dyeing scarlet** probably because heavy drinking reddens the complexion; perhaps because urine, a product of drinking, was used to fix dye

**breathe...watering** pause for breath while drinking (possibly “fart while urinating”)

14 **“Hem!”** sound of disapproval/a clearing of the throat



play it off finish it up

16 **drink...language** i.e. consort comfortably with a drinker of any social class/drink heavily (tinkers were reputedly heavy drinkers)

18 **action** encounter (usually military)

19 pennyworth of sugar small quantity of sugar used to sweeten wine

20 **under-skinker** low-ranking waiter (to “skink” is to pour out liquor)

23 Anon (I'm) coming, just a moment

Score put on the bill

**bastard** sweet Spanish wine



24 **Half-Moon** one of the rooms in the tavern

drive pass

25 **by-room** side room

26 **puny** inexperienced/young/weedy

to what end why

27 **leave** stop







33 **Pomgarnet** Pomegranate, the name of another room in the tavern

37 to serve left of your apprenticeship (the usual length was seven years; Francis is probably fourteen or sixteen)

41 By'r lady by Our Lady (the Virgin Mary)

long...pewter long apprenticeship to learn to be a barman (drinking vessels were made of pewter)

43 **indenture** contract by which an apprentice was bound

45 books i.e. Bibles

50 Michaelmas the feast of Saint Michael, 29 September

52 stay wait





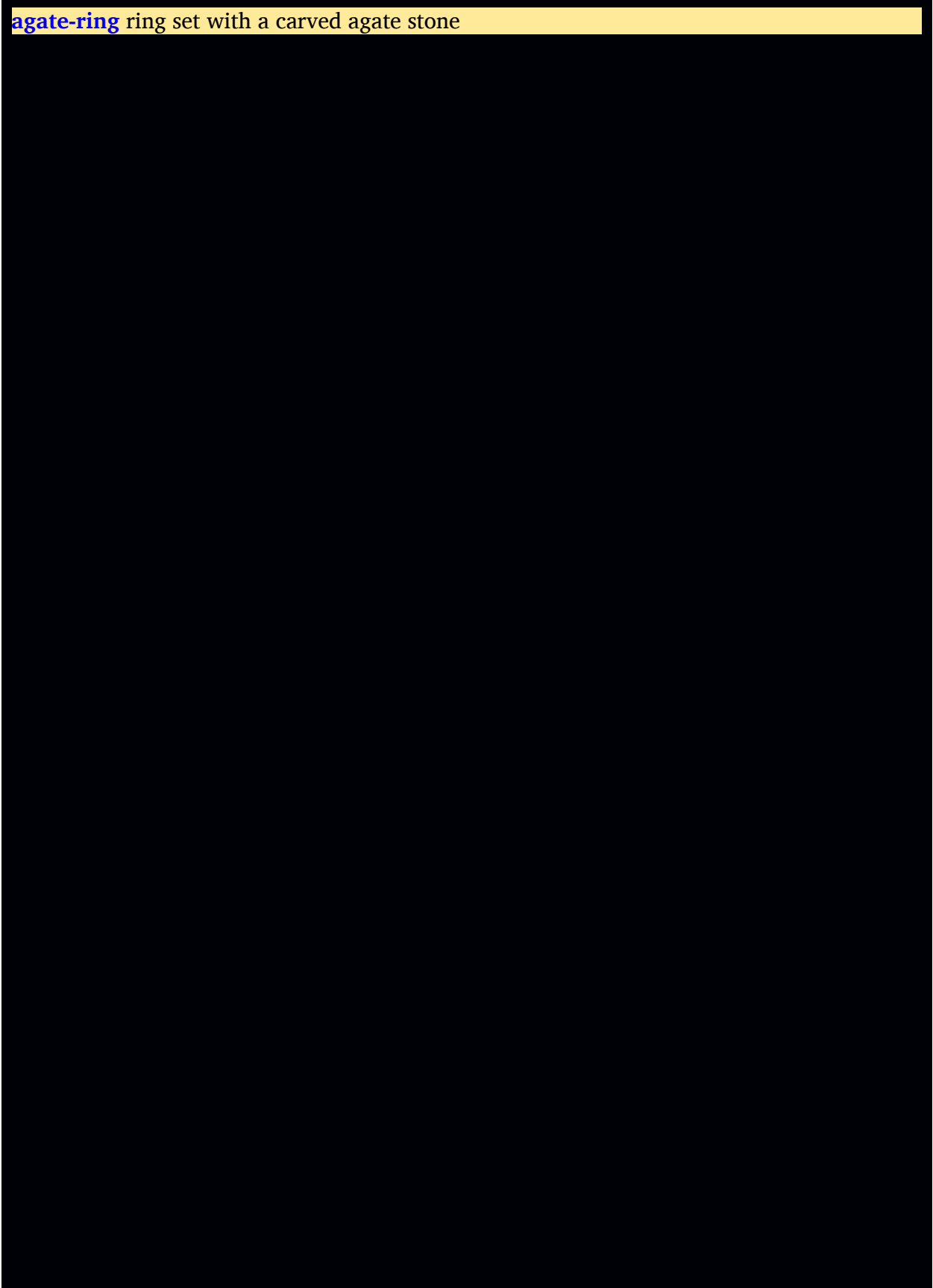
64 **rob** i.e. rob your master of service by running away

**leathern jerkin** (the master who wears a) tight-fitting leather jacket

**crystal-button** fashionable shiny buttons

65 not-pated short-haired

agate-ring ring set with a carved agate stone



**puke-stocking** dark-colored heavy woolen stockings

**caddis-garter** garter made of woolen tape



66 **smooth-tongue** smooth-talker, flatterer

**Spanish-pouch** wallet of Spanish leather

68 **brown bastard** Spanish wine, sweeter than the white variety

**your only drink** the best of drinks

69 doublet tight-fitting jacket

70 **sully** get dirty

**Barbary** region in northern Africa (from which sugar was imported

it i.e. sugar



amazed dumbfounded

**Vintner** innkeeper selling wine

83 merry as crickets proverbial presumably because they jump about “singing”

84 **cunning match** clever game, contest of wits

85 **issue** outcome, point

87 **goodman** title for those below the rank of gentleman (the biblical

Adam was a gardener)

86 I...midnight I now understand all the moods that have ever existed from the beginning of time until now (i.e. I'm in the mood for anything/I have seen everything)



90 **Anon** puns on “one” (pronounced similarly)



**industry** business, labor, diligence

is to run

93 the...reckoning consists of the items on a bill



**kills me** kills **me** is colloquial/emphatic)

98 **drench** drink/draught of medicine



100 **brawn** lump of flesh/fattened boar or pig

101 **Rivo!** presumably a drinking cry; of uncertain origin

102 ribs fatty meat on bones (i.e. Falstaff

**tallow** animal fat



106 **nether stocks** stockings for the lower leg

foot darn the sole, repair the foot

108 virtue extant courage still alive



109 **Titan** Roman sun god (large and red-faced like Falstaff as he “kisses” the cup of sack); there may be sexual innuendo in

**butter** (a whore was a “dish of butter”),

**melted** (ejaculated), and

**tale** (puns on “tail,” i.e. genitals)

110 pitiful-hearted compassionate, tender

111 **compound** mixture (melted butter), i.e. either Falstaff and sack or Falstaff and sweat

112 **lime** calcium oxide, used to preserve wine

115 Go thy ways off you go



118 **shotten herring** a herring that has spawned its eggs (i.e. thin and weak)

120 while present age

121 **weaver** many were Protestant immigrants, known for psalm singing

123 **wool-sack** large bale of wool; judges traditionally sat on them

125 **dagger of lath** stage dagger made of soft wood, traditionally used by the comic Vice in morality plays

126 I'll...more i.e. I'm not a real man

hair a beard

128 **round** fat/plain speaking



137 **backing** supporting/turning one's back, running away

138 **face** stand face to face/defy, contradict

139 drunk have had anything to drink

142 All's...that so what, it doesn't matter

145 **ta'en** taken

149 **poor** only

151 at half-sword at close quarters/fighting with short swords





**buckler** small shield—sword and buckler were considered old-fashioned or lower-class weapons

155 like a hand-saw with the edge so notched from blows it appears serrated like the blade of a saw

**ecce signum** “behold the sign or proof” (Latin; echoes words from the Catholic Mass

dealt fought

156 **all...do** all this was not enough though

158 **sons of darkness** biblical phrase (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

165 **Ebrew Jew** a real (Hebrew) Jew, i.e. a knave

168 come...other the others came in



175 peppered made it hot for, stabbed repeatedly

176 paid settled with, killed

**buckram** coarse linen cloth

178 **ward** defensive posture (fencing term)

lay positioned myself

179 bore my point pointed my sword

let drive at bore down on, attacked





mainly violently

185 made...ado didn't wait any longer

[points](#) sword points

186 **target** shield

190 **these hilts** this sword handle

194 **mark** observe, take note of/keep count

198 **points** sword points, but Poins takes it to mean the laces attaching the

hose to the doublet



200 give me ground back away

me is emphatic)

201 foot and hand at close range

with a thought as quick as thought

205 **misbegotten** wretched, bastard

206 **Kendal green** coarse, green woolen cloth from Kendal in Cumbria (associated with forest outlaws)

208 **father** i.e. Falstaff, here compared to the devil—the proverbial “father of lies”

**begets** conceives, creates



209 **clay-brained** dull-witted

210 knotty-pated thickheaded

211 **tallow-catch** accumulation of animal fat

218 **upon compulsion** under force

219 **strappado** means of torture: the victim was raised by ropes that tied his arms behind his back, then dropped suddenly, which usually dislocated the joints

**racks** instruments of torture: the victim was tied to a frame which was then extended, stretching the arms and legs in opposite directions

220 **reasons** puns on “raisins” (i.e. grapes, less readily available than blackberries)

223 **sanguine** red-faced (with



coward, this creates an oxymoron, as a sanguine temperament was equated with courage)

224 **bed-presser** heavyweight who will strain beds; perhaps also lazy, one who stays in bed

**horseback-breaker** one so fat he breaks horses' backs (pun on "horse"/"whore's")

226 **elf-skin** man of shrunken, fragile form (often emended to “eel-skin”

neat's ox's

227 **pizzle** penis; a dried bull's penis was sometimes used as a whip

**stock-fish** dried cod (suggestive of physical weakness and an impotent penis)

228 **taylor's-yard** measuring yardstick/penis (tailors were sometimes imaged as thin or effeminate men



**sheath** cover for knife or sword, i.e. empty case/vagina

**bowcase** long, thin case for an archer's bow, hence starveling/vagina

229 **standing-tuck** slender sword that is either rigid (i.e. useless because insufficiently resilient) or upright (not engaged in action) or idle, delaying; with phallic connotations

237 with a word in a word/with merely a single word

**out-faced** confronted and intimidated

241 **slave** base-minded villain

243 **starting-hole** bolt-hole, hiding place





246 **knew** recognized

249 **Hercules** Greek hero renowned for strength

**instinct** impulse/innate tendency/intuition

**lion...prince** lions were popularly thought to recognize and refuse to harm royalty

254 **clap to** shut

**Watch** remain awake (for revelry)/be on guard

**Gallants** fine, fashionable young men





257 **extempore** immediately, improvised without rehearsal



260 **an** if

267 **royal** plays on the sense of “coin of greater value than the ‘noble’ [another type of coin]”



277 **fi**e expression of reproach or disgust

282 swear... England swear (falsely) with such conviction that truth fled the country

284 **spear-grass** tough, coarse grass



285 **beslubber** daub, smear



that something



290 **taken...manner** caught red-handed with the evidence/got into the habit

291 **extempore** spontaneously (i.e. Bardolph has a permanently red face from drinking

**fire** i.e. a fiery face

294 **meteors...exhalations** i.e. red blotches on Bardolph's face; meteors were considered bad omens and thought to result from the sun sucking up poisonous vapors from the earth







299 **Choler** anger (choler was one of the four bodily “humors” governing the disposition

**rightly taken** correctly understood (the prince shifts the sense to “justly arrested”)

300 **halter** a noose (Hal puns on

[choler](#)/collar)

302 **bombast** padding/high-flown language

305 **an...in** the width of an eagle's claw around



306 **alderman's thumb-ring** seal ring often worn by wealthy citizens on the thumb





he of Wales i.e. Glendower

**Amamon** name of a demon

311 **bastinado** beating with a stick

Lucifer the devil

**cuckold** man with an unfaithful wife



swore...liegeman made the devil swear to be his true servant

312 **Welsh hook** hooked staff used as a weapon and lacking the cross shape of a sword (on which oaths were customarily sworn

**what a plague** intensified form of “what”

320 **hit it** got it right (the prince plays on the literal sense)

322 **mettle** spirit (plays on the sense of “metal,” i.e. not fluid and liable to run)

323 **run** flee (plays on sense of “melt”)

325 **running** i.e. speeding

326 **cuckoo** i.e. mindless repeater of words



330 **blue-caps** Scottish soldiers, who wore blue hats

332 **you...mackerel** i.e. for very little indeed—mackerel was a cheap fish even when fresh; perhaps land was being sold off to raise money for war or because of general economic anxiety about conflict

**mackerel** plays on the sense of “pimp/whore”)

334 **like** likely

hot plays on angry/lecherous

335 buffeting hold strife continues

[maidenheads](#) virginities

as...hundreds i.e. as cheaply as nails for boots, suggesting that in troubled times women will be raped or forced to sell themselves





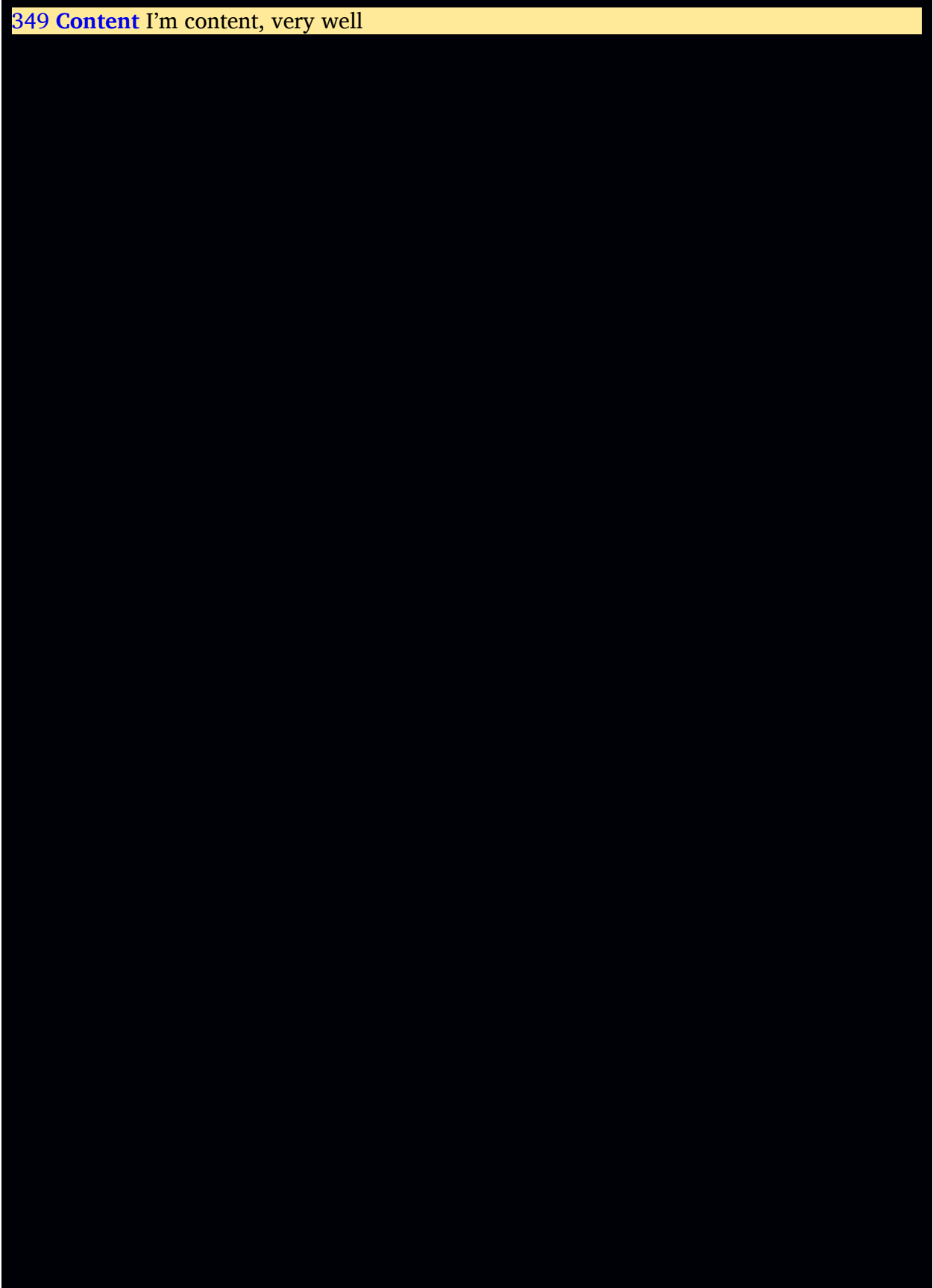
341 **spirit** devil (though the word also has connotations of “courage”)

342 **thrill** tremble/go cold

344 **chid** scolded

347 **stand for** stand in for, play the part of









**joint-stool** low stool made by a joiner (“I took you for a joint stool” was a way of mockingly apologizing for ignoring someone)

353 crown head



355 **moved** affected emotionally, stirred

357 King Cambyses' vein ranting style; Cambyses was the tyrant in Thomas Preston's *Life of Cambyses, King of Persia* (1569)

360 **Stand aside, nobility** presumably those in the tavern are being asked to clear a space

362 **Weep...vain** Falstaff addresses Mistress Quickly, who is presumably weeping from merriment (puns on “quean,” i.e. harlot, whore)

363 O, **the father** i.e. in God's name; or refers to Falstaff acting the part of the prince's father



**holds his countenance** keeps a straight face, remains in character

364 convey take away/escort (to a seat

tristful sorrowful

365 **stop** fill up



harlotry players knavish actors

368 **pint-pot** Falstaff addresses Mistress Quickly with a nickname for one who sells beer

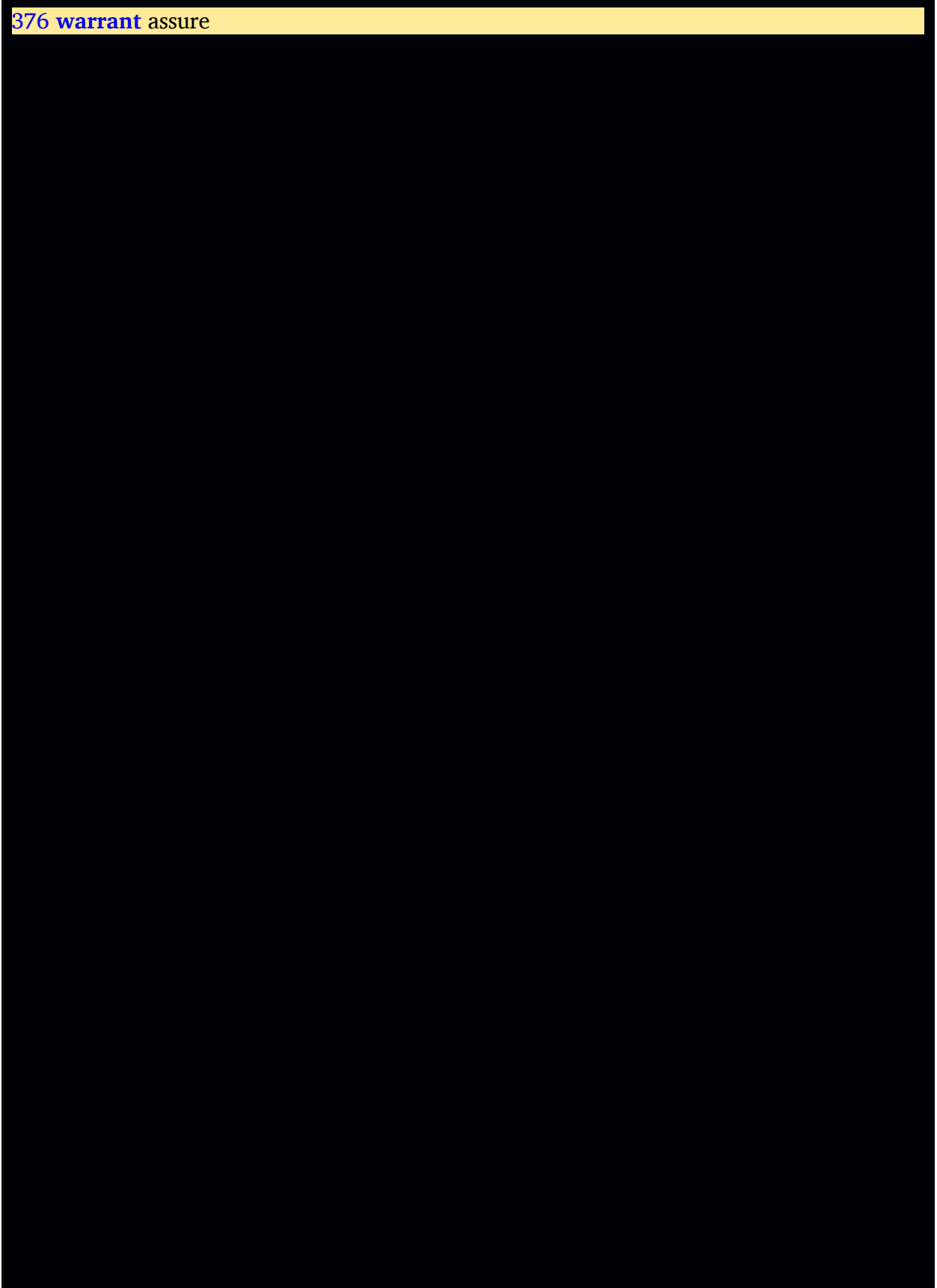
369 **tickle-brain** potent liquor (here, one who sells it)



371 **camomile** daisy-like plant with medicinal qualities; it grows rapidly, proverbially more so when trodden on

375 **trick** habit, feature

**foolish...lip** way of hanging your lower lip, regarded as a sign of loose living **foolish**  
affected/idiotic/lecherous



377 **pointed at** i.e. gossiped about/mockd

378 **sun** puns on “son”

**micher** truant/loiterer/petty thief

382 **pitch** black tar-like substance



383 **defile** stain, corrupt; Falstaff paraphrases Ecclesiastes 13:1: “Whoso toucheth pitch shall be defiled”

385 **passion** sincere emotion, distress

388 [an it like](#) if it please



**corpulent** solid, well-built/fat

390 noble carriage dignified bearing



393 **lewdly given** wickedly, lasciviously inclined





397 **naughty** wicked

403 **rabbit-sucker** unweaned baby rabbit

poulter's hare hare hanging up in a poulterer's shop (which sold fowl and game)

404 **set** seated (on the mock throne)

405 **Judge, my masters** the tavern audience must decide who is the more kingly



411 **ungracious** without grace, blasphemous



414 **tun** large barrel especially for wine or beer/ton weight

**converse** associate

415 **trunk** container/body

**humours** diseases/fluids that determine the disposition: blood, bile, choler, phlegm

**bolting-hutch** large bin used for sifting grain

416 **dropsies** diseases which made the body swell with an accumulation of fluid

**bombard** a leather wine jug

417 **cloak-bag** large bag for carrying clothes



**Manningtree** Essex town with a well-known fair and cattle market



reverend worthy of respect

**Vice** comic character in medieval morality plays who tempted the youthful hero

[grey](#) gray-haired

**Iniquity** sinfulness/allegorical name for morality play character



**Vanity** vain, proud, foolish, worthless character



in years i.e. advanced in years, aged

Wherein...good what is he good for

420 neat and cleanly refined and skillful

421 **cunning** knowledgeable, skillful

**craft** deceit

422 **crafty** skillful

424 **take...you** enable me to follow you, help me to understand

428 **the...know** i.e. I recognize the man but not the description



432 **saving your reverence** begging your pardon/if you will excuse my language

433 **whoremaster** user of whores, i.e. a wicked man

435 **host** innkeeper, pub landlord

436 **Pharaoh's lean kine** biblical reference to Pharaoh's dream in which the seven lean

**kine** (cattle) devour the seven fat kine, foretelling famine to come (Genesis 41:1–31)

445 **monstrous** unnaturally large

**watch** group of citizens responsible for keeping order in the streets at night

449 The...fiddlestick i.e. here's a fine commotion (proverbial)



454 **thou...so** another obscure line; probably either “you are basically true

essentially made) to your friends, even if some of your recent declarations seem to contradict this” or “you are fundamentally a deceptive playactor (**made**), despite seeming to be loyal”; some editors adopt a later reading, and substitute “mad” for “made”

456 deny your major reject your main premise

deny the refuse entrance to the

so so be it

457 **become** suit, befit

**cart** wagon used to transport the condemned man to the gallows

458 **bringing up** upbringing, breeding (which entitled him, as a knight, to death by beheading)/being brought before the authorities/being hanged



soon willingly/quickly

460 arras large tapestry wall hanging (hung so that there was space behind it to hide

walk up above go upstairs



462 **date is out** lease has expired, i.e. it's too late for that

466 hue and cry the noise and shouting of citizens in pursuit of a felon



475 **dinnertime** i.e. midday



476 **answer thee** respond to your charges, account for himself to you



482 **answerable** held responsible



486 **oily** greasy/cunning, slippery

**Paul's** St. Paul's Cathedral, the tallest landmark in London at this time

495 2s 2d two shillings and two pence

497 **ob** abbreviation of “obolus,” i.e. halfpenny





499 intolerable deal excessive quantity

[close](#) hidden, safe

500 **advantage** a better opportunity

503 **charge of foot** command of an infantry company

504 **twelvescore** i.e. 240 yards

money i.e. that was stolen





betimes early

1 **promises** i.e. of support

**sure** secure, reliable

2 **induction** beginning

**prosperous hope** hope of prospering

9 **Lancaster** i.e. King Henry; Glendower deliberately refers to him by his former title (Duke of Lancaster)

15 **front** forehead, face

16 **cressets** torches (literally fires burning in iron baskets), hence meteors (signs of ill omen)



24 as fearing you because it feared you

29 **eruptions** outbreaks of disease/natural or meteorological disturbances

**teeming** fertile, breeding

30 **colic** severe stomach pains

32 womb bowels/stomach

enlargement release

33 **beldam** old woman, grandmother

34 **moss-grown** overgrown with moss, old





**distemperature** bodily disturbance



38 **crossings** contradictions

42 **clamorous** noisy

frighted fields fields full of fear

43 **marked me** marked me out as

44 **courses** events



45 roll list

46 **the living** any person living

clipped in with surrounded by

47 **chides** beats, contends with





**tedious** time-consuming, lengthy, complex

art scholarship/magic, occult arts



51 hold me pace keep up with me

**deep experiments** profound, learned investigations



55 **call** summon, invoke (Hotspur shifts the sense to “call out to”)

vasty deep immense abyss

60 tell ... devil proverbial

65 made head advanced





Wye river on the Welsh-English border

68 **Bootless** unsuccessful, without gain (Hotspur plays on the literal sense)

70 **agues** violent fevers characterized by shaking

71 **right** just claim (to land)

72 **threefold order ta'en** three-way agreement

73 **archdeacon** not identified; chronicle sources suggest Archdeacon of Bangor

74 **limits** regions

75 Trent ... hitherto the rivers Trent and Severn up to this point (presumably Mortimer indicates the map)



81 indentures tripartite contracts drawn up in triplicate

**drawn** drawn up

82 sealed interchangeably each party has a copy signed and sealed by all

83 **this ... execute** can be done tonight

87 appointed agreed by

Shrewsbury town on the Welsh-English border



90 space period of time



93 in my conduct escorted by me

94 **steal** slip away

95 a ... water i.e. many tears





99 comes ... in twists sharply into my section; Hotspur objects that the river turns north from Burton and deprives him of the fertile lands of Lincolnshire and part of Nottinghamshire

101 **cantle out** corner or portion cut off





105 **deep indent** sharp angled section, indentation



109 **he** it (the river Trent)

runs me runs

110 like advantage the same effect

111 **Gelding** depriving, cutting (land) off from

**opposed continent** land on the opposite side

113 **charge** cost/gunpowder used in blasting



**trench** create a trench or channel

114 **cape** spur, projecting piece

122 **Let ... Welsh** i.e. say it in Welsh (which I don't understand) so that I won't understand (and take offense)

125 being but young since I was young at the time

framed to composed for



lovely beautifully

127 gave ... ornament adorned the English language with music and poetry/decorated the words with the music/improved the sound of the language with my Welsh accent





132 **metre ballad-mongers** sellers of predictably rhymed popular ballads

133 brazen brass

**turned** i.e. on a lathe (which made an unpleasant grating noise)

134 dry unoiled

[axle-tree](#) axle



**mincing** affectedly dainty



137 **nag** feeble old horse

141 in ... bargain when it comes to bargaining

142 **cavil on** dispute insistently over



145 **haste the writer** hurry the writer of the indentures

withal at the same time

146 **Break with** speak to, inform

148 **doteth on** loves very dearly, is infatuated with



149 **cross** antagonize

150 choose help it

151 **mouldwarp** mole; according to Holinshed's *Chronicles* the division of the map was arranged in accordance with a prophecy that imaged Henry IV as a mole and the others as dragon, lion, and wolf



**Merlin** wizard and prophet at the legendary court of King Arthur

154 **clip-winged** with its wings clipped, i.e. prevented from flying

**griffin** mythical beast, half lion, half eagle

**moulten** having moulted, lost its feathers



155 **couching** lying down (form of “couchant,” a heraldic term)

**ramping** rearing, standing on its hind legs (form of “rampant,” a heraldic term)

156 **skimble-skamble** incoherent, nonsensical

157 puts ... faith makes me forget or disbelieve my religion



several various

160 **lackeys** servants, followers

**Hum'** noncommittal sound expressing agreement



'Well, go to' i.e. you don't say, well I never

161 **marked him** took no notice of



164 cheese ... windmill i.e. poor food in uncomfortable, noisy accommodation



166 **summer-house** rich man's country house













174 do ... humour antagonize him



177 **taste ... reproof** experiencing harm and rebuke

178 use it oft do it often

179 **wilful-blame** blameworthy for being obstinately self-willed







183 show is evidence of

blood spirit

184 **dearest grace** most valuable advantage

renders offers

185 **present** represent, demonstrate

186 want of government lack of self-control





188 [haunting](#) being associated with

189 **Loseth** causes him to lose

190 parts besides other qualities





be your speed bring you good fortune





198 aunt Percy more confusion between the two Edmund Mortimers: Lady Percy (Hotspur's wife) was in fact the sister of the Mortimer married to Glendower's daughter and aunt of the younger man

199 in your conduct under your escort

200 **desperate here** recklessly determined on this point (her decision not to leave Mortimer)

peevish self-willed harlotry obstinate headstrong hussy



203 swelling heavens i.e. her eyes filled with tears

204 too perfect only too accomplished, fluent

205 **parley** language, conversation (perhaps, picking up on **soldier**, with a sense of “military negotiation”)



207 **feeling disputation** moving, heartfelt discussion/conversation conducted through touch



210 highly penned elaborately composed

212 **division** ornamentation, variation (specifically, passage in which a series of short notes elaborates on a longer passage)

213 melt give way to your feelings, weep



215 **wanton rushes** luxuriant floor covering of reeds

218 crown give power to





222 heavenly-harnessed team horses that drew the sun god's chariot





**drawn** drawn up

228 Hang ... air i.e. they're spirits

thousand leagues three thousand miles

229 **straight** straightaway



230 perfect in expert at, practiced at

**lying down** with sexual connotations (continued in **lap**)

233 devil understands Welsh i.e. because the supposed spirits have answered  
Glendower's call and music is playing

234 **humorous** capricious, whimsical

236 **humours** moods, whims (thought to be generated by bodily fluids or “humors”)

238 **brach** bitch, female dog (called **Lady**)

**Irish** designed as insult here; may possibly suggest his bitch's breed

239 **broken** beaten, grazed



241 **still** quiet, calm

242 **Neither** i.e. I won't do that either

**woman's fault** i.e. being silent (or sexually passive) is a woman's trait; may play on "broken head" as "broken maidenhead" (lost virginity), perhaps with **fault** quibbling on its sense of "vagina/sinful sexual yielding"



250 **comfit-maker's** confectioner's; Hotspur makes fun of a genteel oath and offers several more

253 **sarcenet** **surety** flimsy assurance **sarcenet** fine silken cloth

254 **Finsbury** Finsbury Fields, popular place of recreation just outside the city of London

255 **Swear me** swear/swear for me



257 **protest of pepper-gingerbread** i.e. mild oaths **pepper-gingerbread** in which pepper was partly substituted for ginger, making the gingerbread less spicy and pungent

258 **velvet-guards** velvet trimmings on clothes, or those who wore them

**Sunday-citizens** those keeping their best clothes for Sunday

261 **taylor** tailors were supposed to be enthusiastic singers

be red-breast teacher teach singing to robins (small red-breasted birds)



but seal just put our seals on the documents

1 give us leave please leave us alone



## 6 doom judgment

**blood** family, offspring

7 **scourge** punishment of divine origin/punishing whip

8 passages course through, way of

9 only marked For solely designated to be

10 rod i.e. of punishment

11 **mistreadings** wrongful steps, sins

[else](#) how else



12 **inordinate** immoderate, disorderly

13 **bare** wretched, paltry/undisguised

lewd vulgar, low

attempts undertakings

14 **rude society** vulgar, uncivilized companionship





17 hold their level think themselves equal to



19 **Quit** acquit myself of

clear honest





24 **greatness** the great, the high-ranking



**news-mongers** tellers of tales, gossips

26 **things true** genuine misdemeanors



27 **faulty ... irregular** gone astray off the proper path





30 **affections** tastes, inclinations

hold a wing fly

32 **rudely** violently, in an uncivilized manner (according to an apocryphal tale, the prince was expelled from the King's Privy Council for hitting the Lord Chief Justice)











40 **common-hackneyed** cheapened by habitual exposure (from “hackney,” a horse for hire)



43 Had ... possession would have remained loyal to the holder of the crown (Richard II, deposed by Henry)

44 **reputeless** inglorious, shameful/anonymous, unacknowledged

45 mark significance

**likelihood** prospect of success



50 stole ... heaven adopted a manner of heavenly graciousness

56 pontifical belonging to a bishop



58 **Seldom** infrequently seen

**feast** special occasion, celebration



60 **skipping** frivolous

up and down i.e. aimlessly



61 **rash bavin** quickly burned up **bavin** brushwood or kindling soon ignited and burned

62 **carded his state** destroyed his dignity, kingly status (to “card” is either to mix or to comb impurities from wool)

63 **carping** chattering (Quarto has “capring,” so most editors print “capering”)

64 **scorns** foolishness, mockeries/contemptuous way of speaking

65 **against his name** to the detriment of his royal reputation



**stand the push** expose himself to the proximity/mockery of

67 beardless vain comparative immature, worthless maker of mocking comparisons



69 **Enfeoffed** committed, bound (literally, to vow loyalty to a lord in return for land)

71 **surfeited** grew overindulged and sick

72 loathe ... sweetness i.e. they got sick of the sight of him

75 cuckoo ... June i.e. commonplace by midsummer, not noticed any longer





82 **face** i.e. presence

rendered such aspect with such an expression



83 **cloudy** sullen, gloomy

use to habitually

85 line category

87 vile participation associating with commoners and base, vulgar people

88 **common** widespread, public/cheap, vulgar

91 **tenderness** i.e. tears of affection

93 Be more myself act in a manner more befitting my position





99 He ... state He (Percy) has a more honorable claim to the crown

100 **shadow of succession** mere shadow of a proper heir



colour like to semblance, pretext of



103 Turns head directs his attention/leads his army

**lion's** i.e. the king's (the lion is a traditional symbol of royalty)

104 in ... years older (historically Hotspur was actually twenty-three years older than the prince)





106 bruising damaging, crushing



high illustrious, noble



110 chief ... capital military fame and preeminence

113 **Mars** Roman god of war

**swaddling clothes** wrappings for babies (refers to Hotspur's youth)







ta'en him once captured him on one occasion



117 fill ... up complete the num117a of opponents/add to the roar of opposition

121 **Capitulate** have formed a league, draw up agreements

up i.e. in arms

124 **dearest** most precious, loved/worst, most bitter



125 like likely

**vassal** base, servile

126 **Base inclination** taste for the inferior/acceding to base motives

start of spleen rush of anger

128 **curtsy** bow, show respect


133 redeem ... head atone for my sins with Percy's head/make Percy pay for all this

134 in ... day at the end of some victorious battle

137 favours facial features/chivalric tokens worn to symbolize pledges or great feats



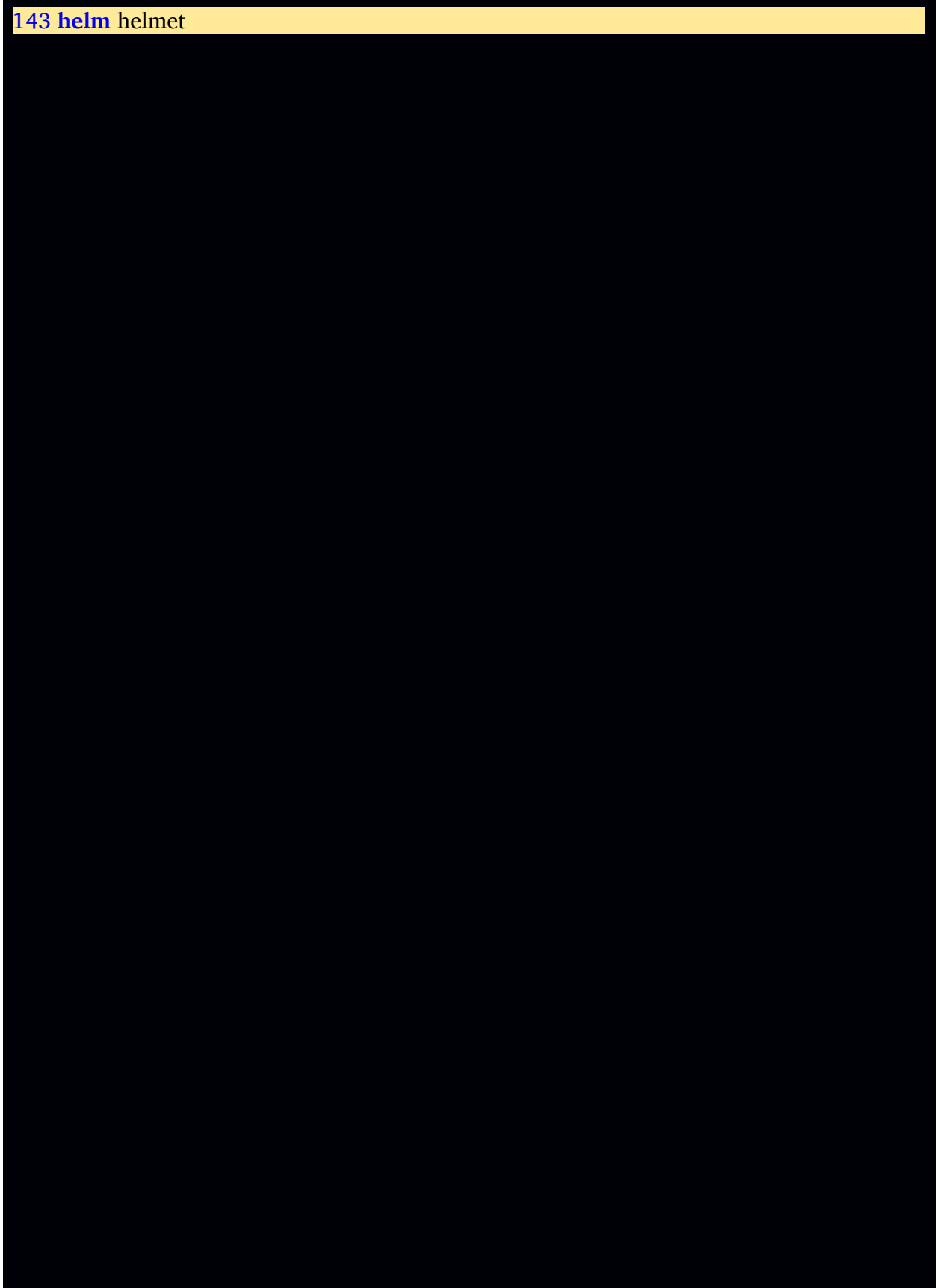
**bloody mask** face made unrecognizable because covered in blood/mass, covering of blood



138 **scour** cleanse, get rid of

139 **lights** arrives/dawns

142 **unthought-of** ignored, associated with no great expectations



148 **factor** agent, commercial broker

149 engross up accumulate, buy up

152 **worship ... time** honor gained in his lifetime



153 **reckoning** account, bill

156 **salve** apply healing ointment to

157 **intemperature** intemperance, lack of restraint/diseased body, disordered health

160 **parcel** part

162 **charge** command (of troops)

**sovereign** supreme, royal (perhaps continuing the disease imagery with play on the sense of “healing”)







169 If ... **hand** if all who have promised to join them do so



176 **Bridgnorth** small Shropshire town on the River Severn, south of Shrewsbury

178 Our business valuèd according to this reckoning

181 Advantage ... fat opportunity (for rebellion) increases

1 fallen away vilely horribly shrunken

2 **action** engagement, battle (i.e. the robbery on Gad's Hill)

bate decrease



4 **apple-john** type of apple said to be in best eating condition when shriveled

suddenly immediately

5 in some liking in the mood/in good physical condition

**out of heart** disheartened/out of condition

6 **strength** i.e. physical or spiritual

7 **peppercorn** i.e. small and shriveled

8 brewer's horse i.e. old and worn out

10 **fretful** restless, anxious/frayed, worn



11 **there is it** i.e. exactly, that's the situation

12 given inclined



16 **compass** measure, moderation/circumference (referring to his wide girth), belt

21 **admiral** flagship with a **lantern** to guide the rest of the fleet

**poop** stern or rear of a ship

22 nose i.e. because it is red from drinking

**Knight ... Lamp** mock-chivalric title parodying heroic names in tales of romance



26 **death's-head** skull (i.e. emblem of mortality, often carved into a stone set in a ring)

*memento mori* object used to symbolize death (Latin: “reminder of death”)

27 Dives ... purple refers to Christ's parable of Dives, the rich man clothed in purple who goes to hell for allowing the pauper, Lazarus, to starve (Luke 16:19–31)

30 **given over** lost to virtue, committed to sin

34 *ignis fatuus* will-o'-the-wisp, marsh gas which gives off phosphorescent light and misleads night wanderers

**ball of wildfire** will-o'-the-wisp/ball of lightning/skin disease characterized by vivid eruptions

**purchase** value

35 **bonfire-light** Folio spells "Bone-fire-Light," suggesting both etymology and original pronunciation



36 [links](#) torches

38 drunk me drunk (me is emphatic)

39 good cheap cheap

chandler's candlemaker's

40 **salamander** lizard-like creature supposed to live in fire

42 I ... belly! proverbial retort (compares to modern “Get stuffed!”)

43 **be heart-burned** have indigestion/my heart would be literally on fire

44 Dame Partlet traditional name for a hen





51 **was shaved** had his beard cut/went bald through syphilis/had his head shaved to get rid of lice/was robbed; **hair** may play on “whore”

53 **woman** i.e. inadequate/deceitful/promiscuous

56 **know** am acquainted with/have sexual knowledge of



60 to your back for you to wear

61 **Dowlas** coarse linen (from Doulas in Brittany)

62 **bolters** cloths used for sifting flour



63 **holland** fine linen (originally from Holland)

64 **ell** a measure of length (forty-five inches)

65 diet and by-drinkings meals and drinks in between meals

71 **denier** small coin worth one tenth of a penny

**younger** fashionable and gullible young man, easily duped

72 take mine ease relax

73 **seal-ring** engraved ring used for sealing documents with wax, frequently an heirloom

**forty mark** a substantial sum of money; a **mark** was worth two thirds of a pound



76 **jack** knave, rascal

**sneak-cup** sneaky person, knave/one who sneaks drinks from others' cups

*truncheon* cudgel (symbol of his new military office)

78 Is ... **door**? i.e. is that the situation **door** direction

79 two ... fashion prisoners were shackled together and led in pairs to Newgate, the City prison

88 **pick pockets** plays on the sense of “plunder vaginas”

90 **bonds** deeds promising the bearer payment

99 stewed prune commonly available in brothels, hence “whore/pimp”



100 drawn fox hunted fox (drawn from cover and dependent on its cunning for safety)

101 **Maid Marian** a disreputable character in morris dances and May games, played by a boy in female clothing

**deputy's ... ward** wife of the deputy of the ward (an administrative district), i.e. a respectable woman

102 to compared to

**nothing** thing of no significance/vagina (“no thing”)



on for

107 **thy knighthood** the respect usually due to one who is a knight



111 **otter** an aquatic mammal whose exact nature and type was a subject of debate

114 **have** place, categorize/have sex with

133 **whelp** cub, offspring

136 let ... break the breaking of one's belt (**girdle**) proverbially signified bad luck

142 **embossed** swollen/foaming at the mouth with exhaustion like a hunted animal

**rascal** rogue/young, inferior deer

144 memorandums bills, invoices

145 **sugar-candy ... long-winded** sugar was used to improve stamina



146 **injuries** items whose loss you claim has caused you injury

147 **stand to it** insist, maintain your grievance

**pocket up** accept (plays on literal sense of “pocket”)

151 **flesh ... frailty** Falstaff plays with the biblical saying “the flesh is frail” (Matthew 26:41 and elsewhere)



160 answered accounted for

161 **sweet beef** plump, fresh, unsalted beef

[good angel](#) guardian angel



163 **double labour** i.e. first taking it, then returning it



167 with unwashed hands straightaway/without scruple

169 **charge of foot** command of an infantry company

172 **unprovided** ill-equipped (for villainous exploits)

173 **they ... virtuous** i.e. by causing war, which provides opportunities for theft and profiteering



181 **Temple hall** the Inner Temple at one of the London Inns of Court (where young men studied law)



183 **charge** company, regiment





Brave splendid

188 **tavern** ... **drum** Falstaff wishes he might remain at the inn; a **drum** summoned soldiers to battle (possible pun on **tavern**/"tabarin," a type of drum)

2 **fine** overrefined

3 **attribution** honor, praise

4 As not a that no other



season's stamp year's design or mint (coinage term)

5 **general current** generally accepted (continues coining imagery)

6 **defy** reject, challenge

7 soothers flatterers

braver more honorable

9 task hold

approve me prove, test

11 breathes ... ground lives



12 beard i.e. challenge, defy (literally, pull insultingly by the beard)

14 but only

19 **jostling** clashing, contentious

power army



21 **bears** contain/reveal

I **his mind** this Folio reading makes sense, though it is cheeky for the messenger to answer back in this way; most modern editors emend to “not I, my lord.”





25 He ... by his health was much feared for



state of time present situation

whole sound, healthy

28 **better worth** more important

31 **catching hither** contagious even here

32 He ... sickness possibly an incomplete line, or one that expresses Hotspur's hasty manner of speaking

33 by deputation through those acting on his behalf



34 **drawn** drawn together, assembled

meet fitting, appropriate

35 dear important

37 **bold advertisement** resolute advice/advice to be resolute



on proceed







45 present want absence now

46 more ... it worse than it will actually prove to be

47 **set** hazard, stake

48 **cast** throw of the dice

[main](#) army/gambling stake

49 **nice hazard** delicate risk/precarious game of dice

doubtful uncertain







52 list limit

**bound** extent, boundary

55 **reversion** backup, something to be relied on (literally, future inheritance)

58 **retirement** something to fall back on/peace, seclusion



60 **big** threateningly, menacingly

61 **maidenhead** beginning, first trial (literally, virginity)









mere absolute

68 **apprehension** thought, perception

69 **fearful faction** (rebel) alliances that generate fear/frightened groups (of rebel sympathizers)

70 **question** doubt, mistrust

71 **offring** challenging, aggressing



72 **strict arbitrement** close scrutiny, rigorous judgment

73 **loop** loophole, aperture

75 draws opens

78 strain too far exaggerate

79 **make this use** find this advantage

80 **opinion** renown, prestige



83 **make a head** raise an army





joints limbs

87 As ... think i.e. as can possibly be wished

93 **No harm** i.e. that doesn't matter

96 **intended** is about to leave



100 daffed tossed carelessly

102 furnished equipped



103 **estridges** ostriches (presumably the men's helmets are adorned with feathers)



105 **golden coats** sleeveless outer garments richly adorned with heraldic arms, worn over armor

[images](#) gilded statues/emoles

107 **gorgeous** brightly colored, magnificent

108 **Wanton** wild, frolicsome, carefree

109 **beaver** helmet (technically, the visor)

110 **cuisse**s thigh armor



111 feathered Mercury Roman messenger of the gods, usually depicted with wings on cap and sandals

112 **seat** i.e. saddle



**Pegasus** winged horse in Greek mythology



117 **agues** violent fevers thought to be bred or worsened by the early spring **sun**

118 **trim** finery, adornment (like animals garlanded for sacrifice)

119 maid ... war Bellona, the Roman goddess of war



121 **mailed Mars** Roman god of war, clad in armor

123 reprisal prize



132 draw ... days gather his forces for a fortnight

135 What ... unto? What is the total num96a of the king's troops?

139 powers of us forces we have

serve suffice for









143 ~~this one-half year~~ six months; Douglas does not expect to die within this period

1 **get thee before** you go on ahead

3 **Sutton Coldfield** Warwickshire town twenty miles northwest of Coventry

5 Lay out pay for it yourself

6 **makes** brings the amount you owe me to (Falstaff responds to the sense of “creates”

**angel** a gold coin variously worth between 6s 8d and 10s



8 answer the coinage be responsible for the validity of the coins

11 soused gurnet type of pickled fish/drunkard



**I...pounds** Falstaff has allowed those who can afford it to buy their way out of being soldiers



14 **good** substantial, wealthy

15 yeoman's sons the sons of freeholders of small landed estates

**inquire me out** ask for, seek



**contracted** engaged (to be married)

16 **banns** public notice of the intention to marry, announced in church on three successive Sundays; the

**bachelors** here are to be married soon

**commodity** portion, quantity

17 **warm** comfortably off/sexually eager

lieve soon

**drum** i.e. customarily sounded to enlist recruits or call men to battle

18 caliver musket, lightweight firearm



19 ~~toasts-and-butter~~ milksops, pampered fellows

20 hearts...heads i.e. those with little appetite for fighting

22 **charge** command, unit

**ancients** ensigns, i.e. soldiers who carried military banners (plays on the sense of “elderly people”)

23 gentlemen of companies gentlemen soldiers without formal rank

**Lazarus...sores** refers to the biblical story of the beggar Lazarus and the contemptuous rich man (Luke 16:19–21)

24 **painted cloth** cheap wall hanging depicting the biblical tale



25 discarded unjust servingmen dismissed dishonest servants



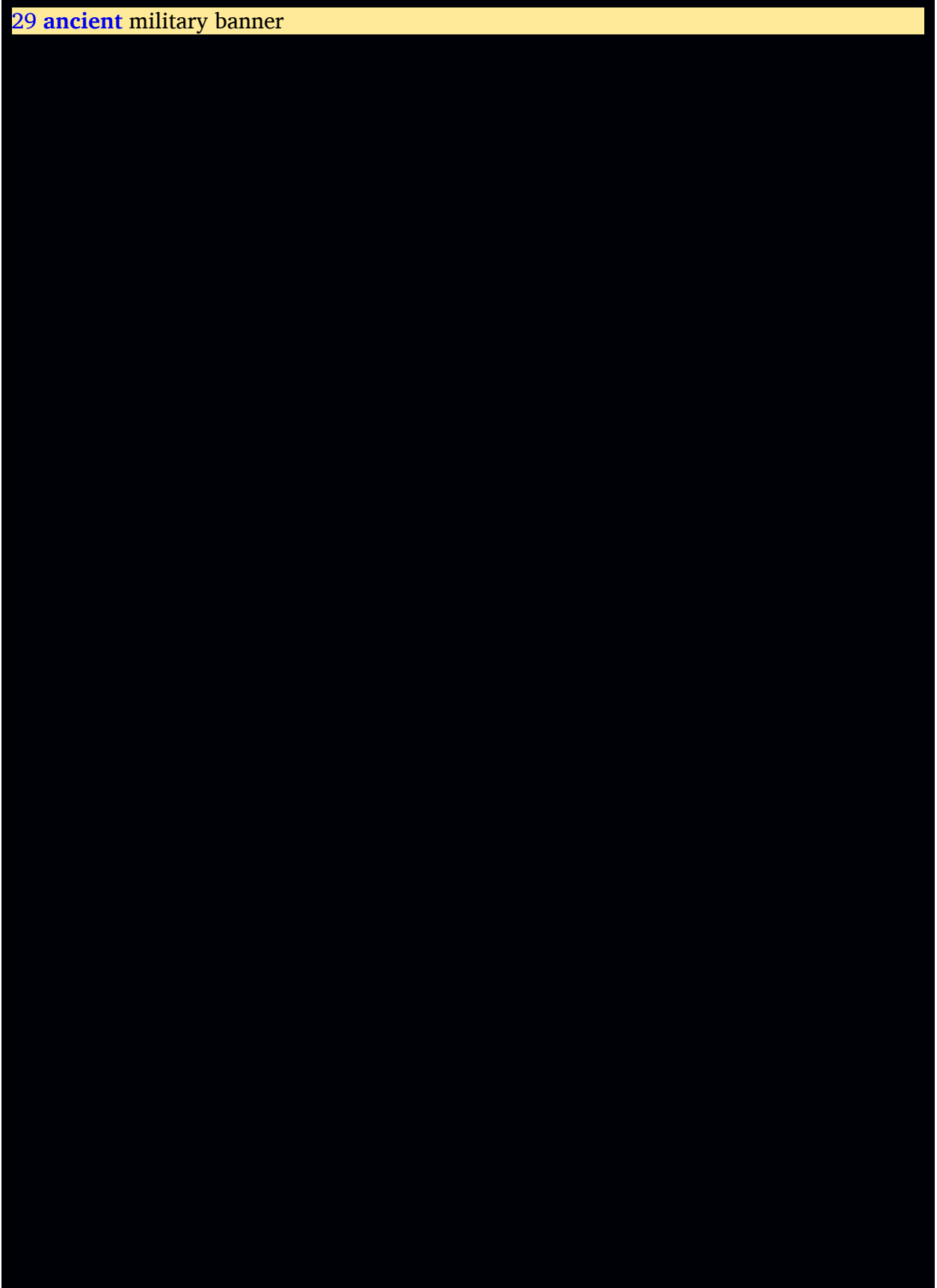
26 **younger...brothers** i.e. those with no hope of a substantial inheritance

**revolted tapsters** apprentice barmen who have run away from their masters

27 ostlers trade-fallen out-of-work stablemen

**cankers** ulcers/parasites

29 **ancient** military banner



rooms places

31 **prodigals** in the biblical parable, the prodigal (extravagant) son wasted his inheritance and was reduced to feeding with the pigs

32 **draff and husks** pigswill and corn husks





37 **gyves** leg-irons, shackles

40 **herald's...sleeves** the tabard was a sleeveless outer garment open down the sides

42 **Saint Albans** town along Watling Street about twenty-five miles north of London

**Daventry** Northamptonshire town southeast of Coventry

43 **find...hedge** i.e. they'll steal clothes left to dry on hedgerows

44 **blown** swollen/short of breath

**quilt** padded covering/fat man (plays on Falstaff's name, Jack, which could also mean a padded tunic worn instead of armor)



47 cry you mercy beg your pardon

51 looks for expects

52 **fear** doubt

55 **butter** i.e. fat

59 **toss** throw away/impale on a pike

food for powder cannon fodder

60 pit mass grave

as well as better just as well as better men would



**Tush** exclamation of contempt

63 **bare** poorly clothed/inadequately equipped (Falstaff shifts the sense to “bare-boned, thin”)



71 stay delay

73 To...**guest** i.e. the end of a fight and the beginning of a feast is the best time to arrive for one keener on eating than fighting (proverbial)

1 him i.e. the king

3 then in that case, if you wait

5 Looks...supply? Is he not expecting reinforcements?



13 **maintain** justify, support, prove

14 **well-respected** well-considered

bid me on urges me forward





25 Drag hold

**expedition** speedy action

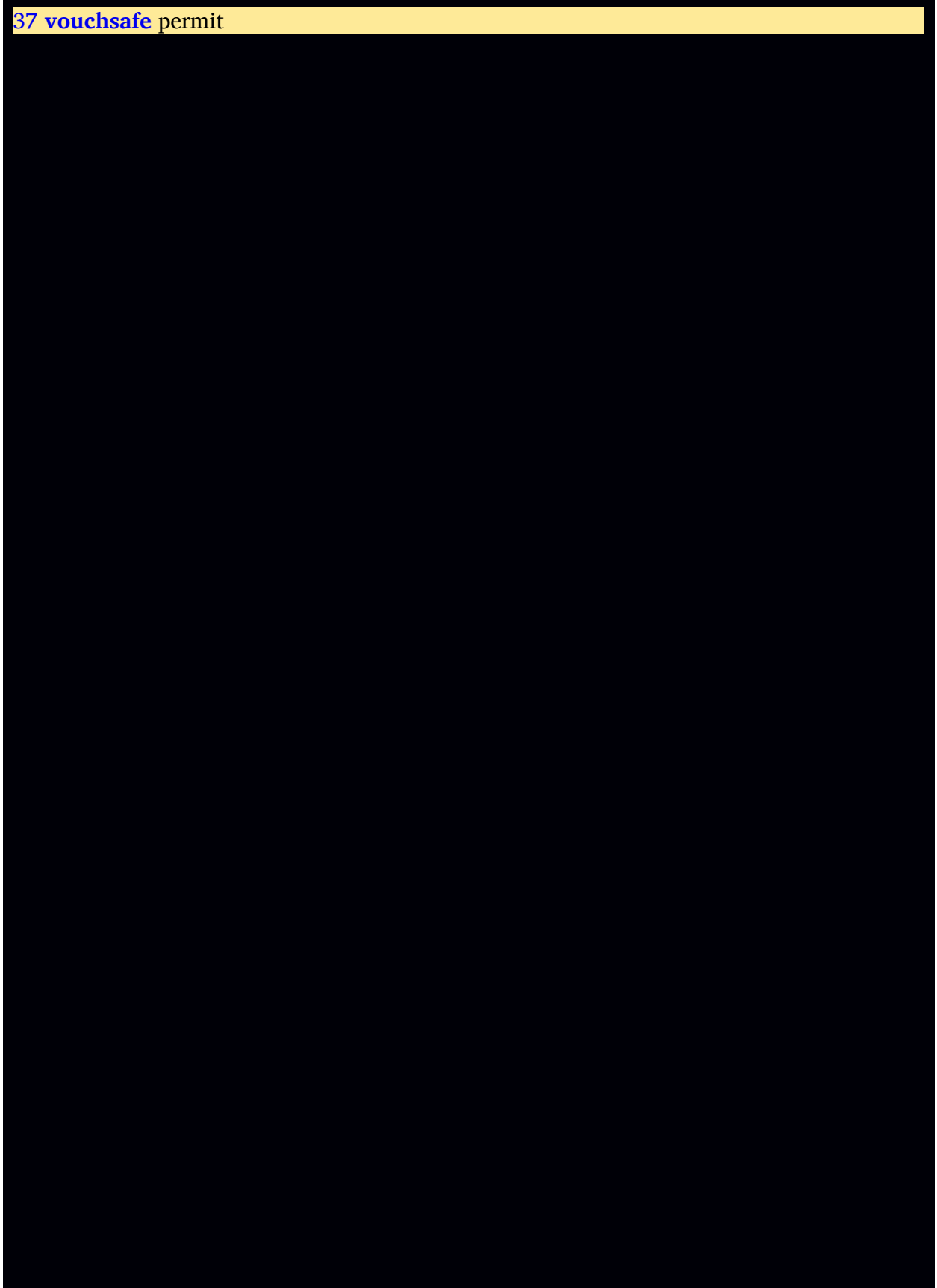
[horse](#) horses, cavalry





30 That...himself so that none of the horses is even a quarter of its normal strength

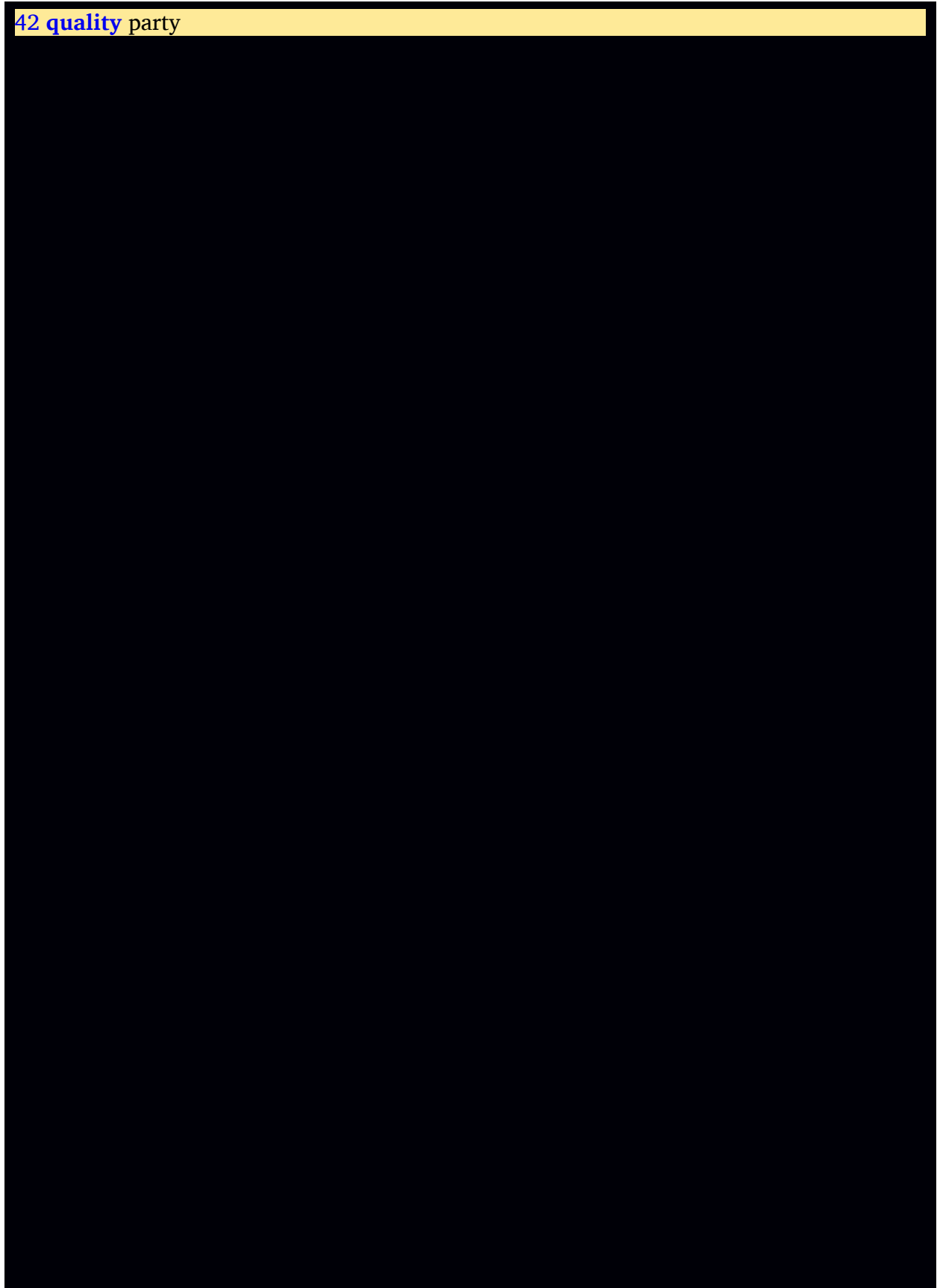
32 **journey-bated** exhausted by traveling *parley* trumpet summons to negotiation between enemy forces



respect consideration



40 even those some those very people





44 defend forbid

45 **out of limit** past the bounds of natural order and allegiance

46 **anointed** i.e. rightful, legitimate (having been marked with holy oil as part of the coronation ceremony)

47 **charge** duty, task



whereupon on what grounds

49 **conjure** call forth (with connotations of magical invocation and bewitchment)







55 with interest and more in addition



62 was...strong had fewer than twenty-six followers

63 Sick...regard suffering poor public reputation



**outlaw** Richard II had banished Henry Bullingbrook; he returned following his father's death and Richard's seizure of his land and titles

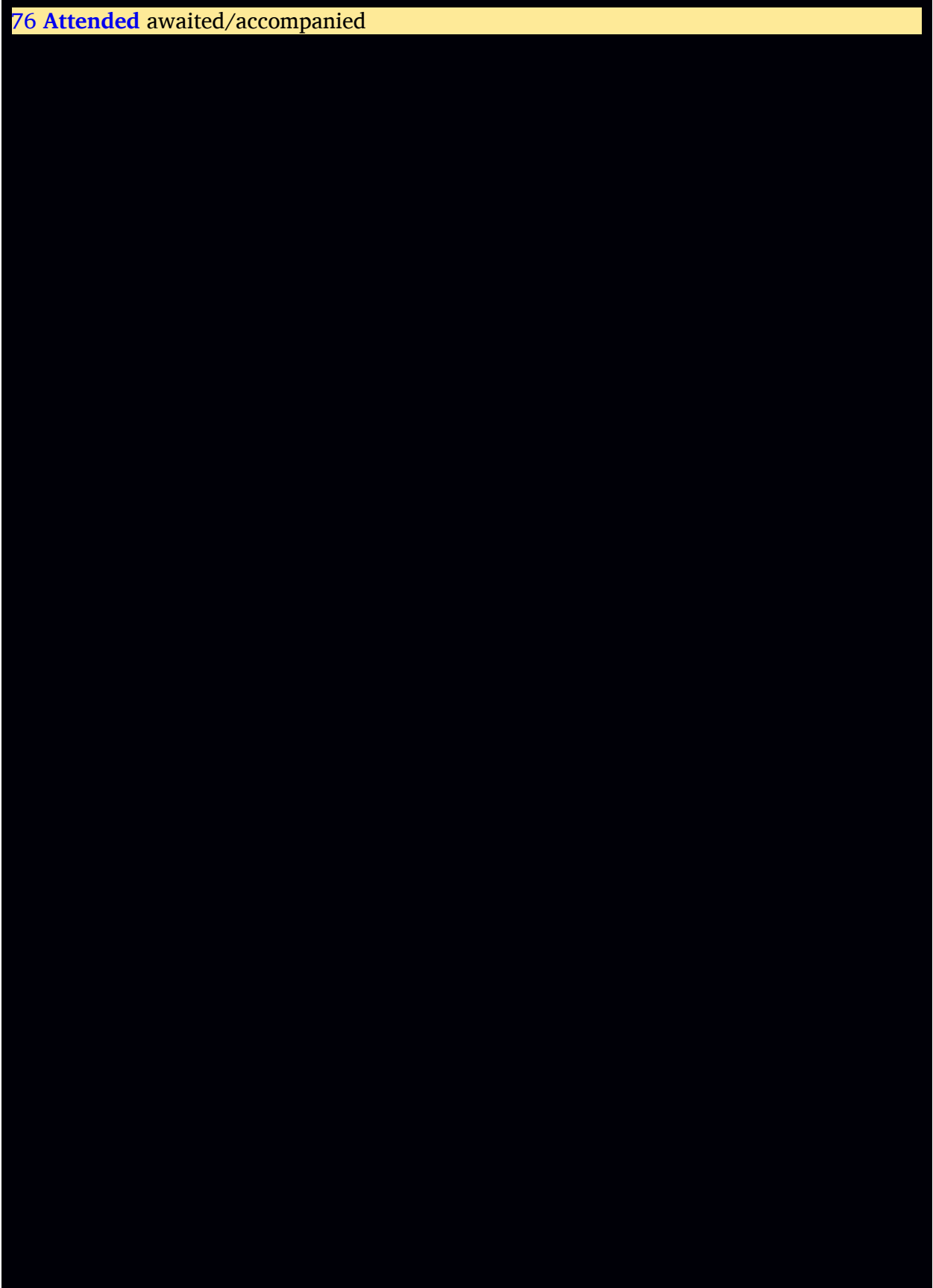
68 sue his livery legally claim his right to inherit his father's lands and title



beg his peace seek reconciliation with King Richard

69 **terms of zeal** i.e. eager assurances of loyalty

74 **more...knee** those of higher and lower social status offered him allegiance—with cap in hand and knees bent in a bow/kneeling



lanes paths/rows

78 heirs...followed punctuated thus in Folio, but most editors emend to “heirs as pages, followed,” thus altering the sense

79 **golden** splendidly or brightly dressed/celebratory, joyous/rich, abundant





greatness knows itself those in power come to understand their situation

81 Steps...higher becomes more ambitious

82 his...poor he was still humble/before he was king

84 **forsooth** in truth, perhaps used ironically here

85 **strait** harsh, strict

87 Cries...abuses condemns corruption, draws attention to wrongs

91 cut...favourites Richard's favorite courtiers were beheaded

cut me cut



me is emphatic)

93 In deputation as his deputies

94 was personal in went in person to

99 in...of on the strength of/immediately after

**tasked** taxed

100 **March** the Earl of March, Edmund Mortimer

101 if...placed if every claimant were entitled to occupy their rightful position

102 engaged held hostage





104 **Disgraced...victories** i.e. by demanding my prisoners, the King turned my triumphs into disgrace



106 **Rated** chided angrily, dismissed

110 head of safety defensive army

withal furthermore

[pry...title](#) examine his claim (to the throne)

112 **indirect** insufficiently direct in the line of succession/devious, irregular



for long continuance to last long

115 **impawned** pledged, held in pawn



119 **accept...love** i.e. be reconciled.

*Sir Michael* presumably a priest or a knight; “sir” can be a courtesy title for clergymen

1 **Hie** go quickly

**brief** letter, dispatch

4 **directed** addressed



5 much...import much information they contain/important they are

7 **tenor** substance, drift

8 Like likely

11 **bide the touch** be put to the test (as gold is tested with a touchstone)

14 Lord Harry i.e. Hotspur

16 power...proportion army was of the greatest size/importance

18 **rated firmly** considered to be strong, a powerful source of support

19 comes not in does not participate



**o'er-ruled by prophecies** i.e. he is staying away due to unfavorable predictions of events

21 **instant trial** immediate test of strength







dear honorable/valuable







39 **confederacy** league, conspiracy (with the rebels)

40 **make strong** strengthen our defenses

2 **busky** bush-covered

3 **distemperature** unhealthy, unnatural appearance

5 the trumpet part of trumpeter or herald

9 **foul** gloomy, bad (weather)

13 doff take off

easy comfortable



14 **ungentle steel** hard, uncomfortable steel armor



17 **churlish** rude, ungracious, base

18 orb orbit, sphere

20 **exhaled meteor** meteors were believed to be formed of vapors drawn from the earth ("exhaled") by the sun; they were considered bad omens



22 **broachèd** already begun

**mischief** evil, calamity



unborn times future



lag-end latter part

27 **dislike** animosity, discord

30 **chewet** chough, jackdaw, i.e. chatterer/minced meat or fish pie

33 **remember** remind

35 **staff of office** Worcester had been steward of the king's household

36 **posted** rode speedily



39 **Nothing** nowhere near

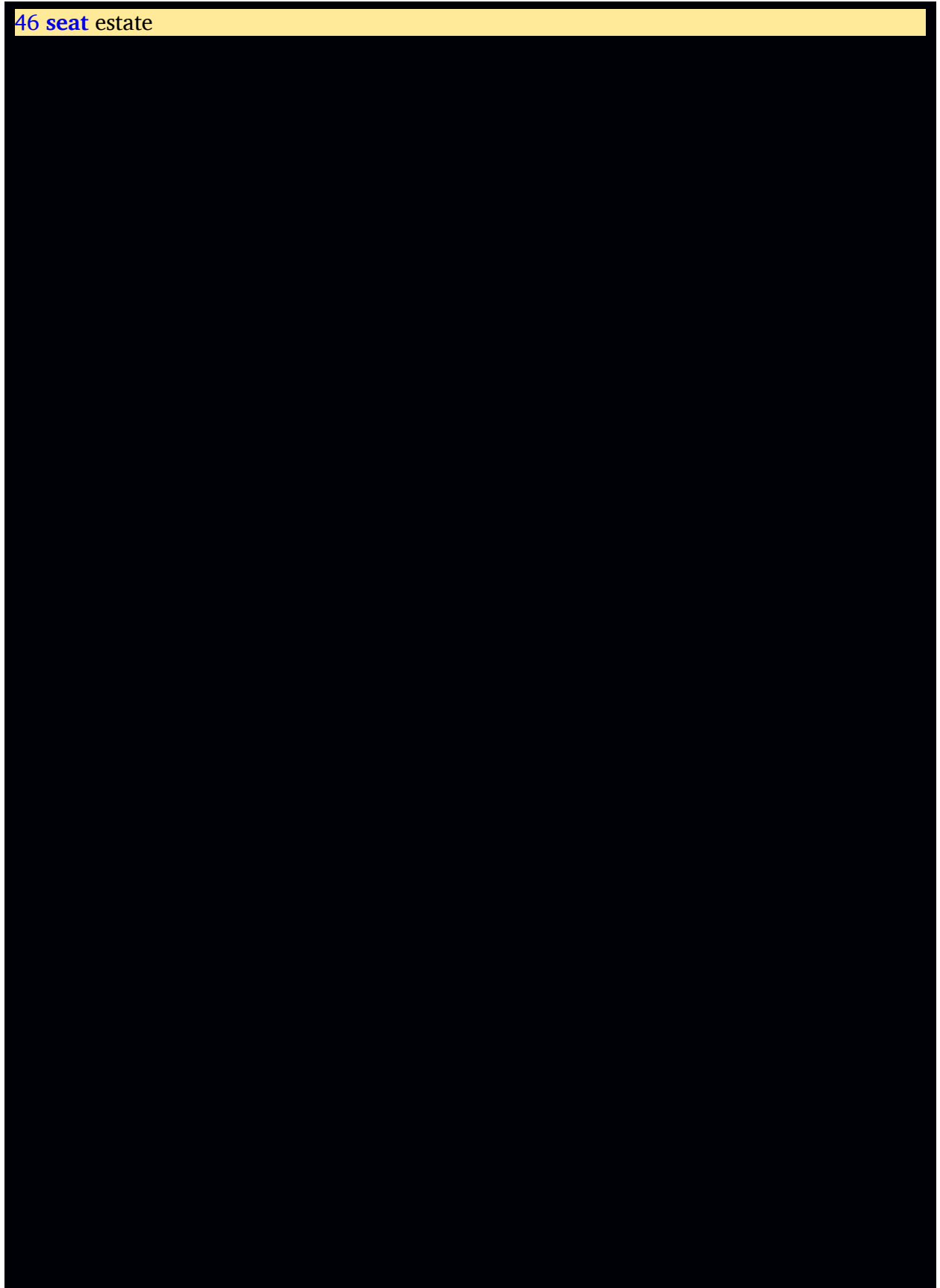
41 **brought** escorted, accompanied

outdare defy

43 **Doncaster** town in the northeast of England

44 **did...state** had no intention of threatening the realm

45 new-fall'n right recently inherited title (after his father's death)



**Gaunt** John of Gaunt, Henry's father





**wanton** ungoverned, poorly managed



53 **contrarious** opposing, unfavorable



55 **repute** believe him to be



wooded persuaded



58 gripe grip, grasp

general sway overall power

61 **ungentle gull** cruel/dishonorable young bird

**cuckoo's...sparrow** the cuckoo lays its eggs in other birds' nests to be hatched and fed; cuckoo chicks are much bigger and eventually take over the nest



durst not did not dare

65 **swallowing** being eaten

68 **opposèd...means** in opposition to you as a result of such factors













77 **changelings** turncoats, changeable people

**discontents** discontented persons

78 rub the elbow hug themselves in pleasure





**innovation** novelty, change, revolution

80 **want** need, lack



**impaint** paint, color

82 **moody** sullen, angry

83 **havoc** plundering, violent disorder







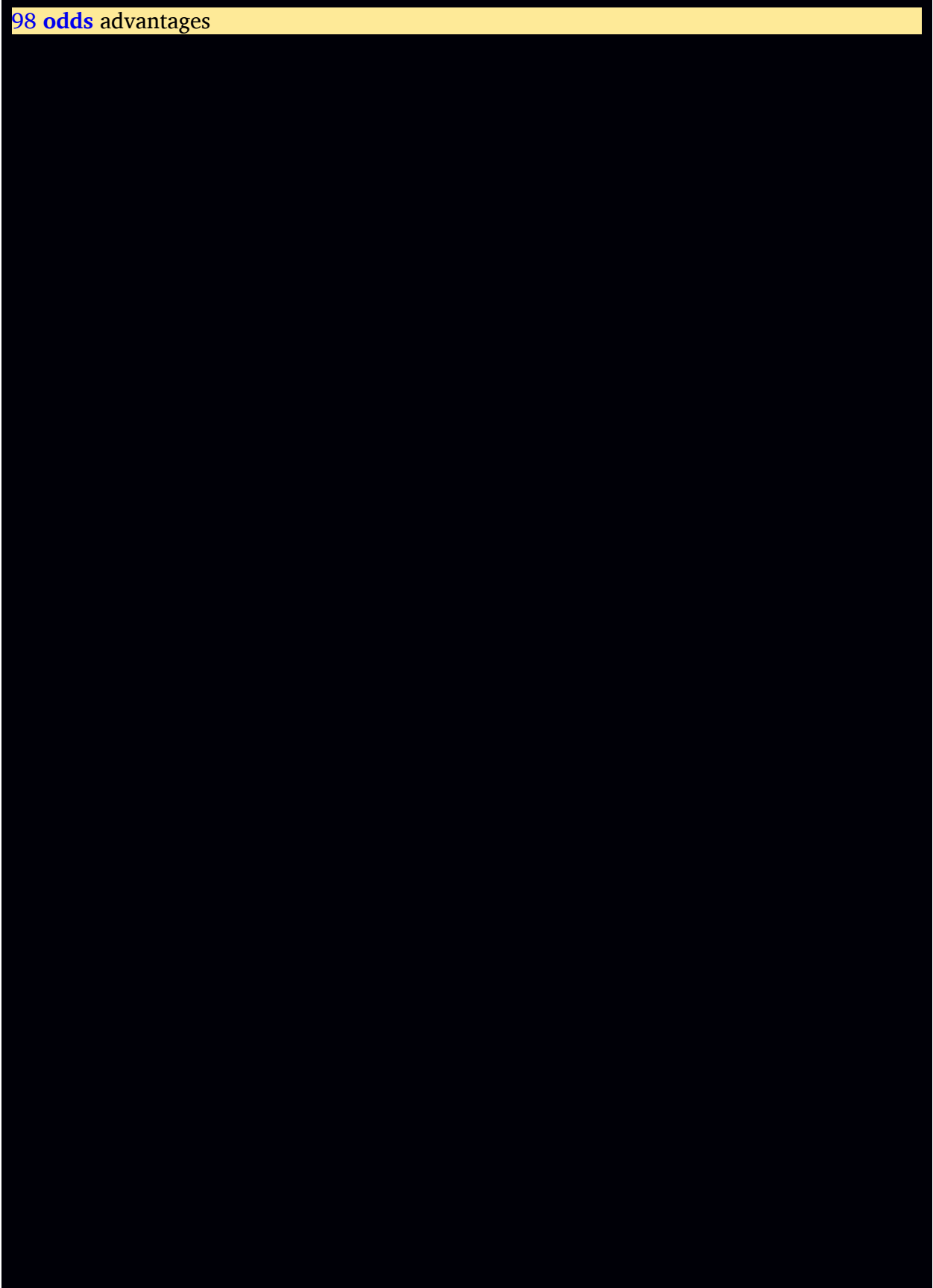
88 by my hopes i.e. of salvation

89 **set...head** not counted against him

90 **braver** finer/more courageous



97 **this** I say this









103 **Albeit** despite the fact that







112 **Rebuke** shame, disgrace

dread correction terrible punishment

**wait on us** are at my command







take it advisedly consider it carefully

119 **charge** command/ company, unit/responsibility

120 on their answer once we've had their answer, i.e. refusal of the terms

122 **bestride** stand astride a fallen man in order to defend him

123 so thus—presumably Falstaff demonstrates the gesture

124 **colossus** giant; the Colossus of Rhodes, a gigantic statue of Apollo, supposedly stood astride the entrance to the harbor



127 **death** proverbial; puns on “debt”





131 prick me off marks me down (for a dead man)

132 [set...leg](#) join together, set a broken leg



135 trim fine, neat

137 **insensible** cannot be felt by the senses





139 **scutcheon** heraldic shield, decorated with coats of arms and often used at funerals

140 **catechism** set series of questions and answers (used as a form of instruction by the Church)

4 **undone** ruined

7 still always

## 9 Supposition notions, uncertainty, speculation

stuck...eyes always watching, suspicious

11 ne'er so tame however tame he appears





13 Look...can however one appears

or sad either sad

14 **misquote** falsely report, misinterpret

16 The...death refers to the fact that

oxen are fattened up before being killed

17 trespass wrongdoing, transgression

19 adopted...privilege nickname which gives him license (i.e.



**Hotspur**, signifying rash impulsiveness)

20 **hare-brained** reckless, rash

**spleen** violent bad temper (from the abdominal organ regarded as the location of strong emotion)

21 live upon shall be blamed on

22 **train** lead

23 **ta'en** derived, caught (like an infectious disease)




26 In any case whatever happens



27 Deliver...so say what you like, I'll agree

30 **Deliver up** release—Westmorland has been held as surety for Worcester's safe return



32 battle to engage in battle

33 Defy him by send our defiant response through



38 **gently** with dignity, like a gentleman

39 mended improved on, contributed to

40 **forswearing...forsworn** falsely swearing that he had not broken his word





43 **Arm** prepare, put on your armor

45 **engaged** held as hostage

bear convey

49 **would...heads** if only the quarrel was just between the two of us

50 draw short breath become out of breath (from fighting)/die

51 **Monmouth** nickname for the prince; the name of the town on the Welsh-English border where he was born





56 **gentle** honorable/not excessively violent

**proof of arms** trial of fighting skills



58 Trimmed...praises adorned his praise of you

59 **chronicle** factual historical account

60 **Making...you** increasing your worth since no praise of his could do justice to your merits

63 **blushing cital** modest account





**truant** neglectful, misspent

65 double...instantly two sides of himself, both teacher and pupil, at the same time





70 **wantonness** wild, dissolute behavior



73 so...liberty who indulged in so much lawless freedom, wild behavior

76 shrink...courtesy be overwhelmed by my degree of courtesy/collapse, be wounded by me



78 **Better...persuasion** you are better off thinking for yourselves about what you have to do than expecting me, who lacks the gift of eloquence, to try to rouse your spirits

85 If even if

**dial's point** hand of a clock

84 To...hour a life spent basely goes on for too long even if it only lasts an hour







92 cuts me forces me to break off



93 **profess not** don't claim to be expert at

95 **temper** character/degree of hardness



98 *Esperance!* hope (French; part of the Percy family motto)

99 **instruments** i.e. trumpets, drums

101 **heaven to earth** I'll wager heaven against earth (i.e. something eternal and valuable against something transitory and unimportant)

*[and exeunt]* most editions introduce a scene break here, but Folio does not have one and the action continues, with the imaginary location shifting seamlessly from rebel camp to battlefield

*Alarum* call to battle (played on a trumpet)



*[dressed like the King]* wearing the king's colors, Blunt is acting as a decoy. Most editors introduce a scene break at this stage direction, since the stage is momentarily bare and the imaginary location shifts from the rebel camp to the battlefield, but in the early texts and onstage the action is continuous



110 dear at great cost

**bought Thy likeness** paid for appearing like you (i.e. Stafford was also dressed like the king)





124 **Semblably furnished** similarly dressed and armed

128 [marching...coats](#) wearing the same clothing as him



**coats** sleeveless outer garments adorned with heraldic arms, worn over armor

133 [stand...day](#) seem likely to win the battle *solus* alone

134 **shot-free** without paying the tavern bill/without getting shot

135 **scoring** adding to tavern bill/being wounded

pate head

136 **Here's no vanity!** There's no self-conceit or concern for frivolity in death!







139 **bowels** guts, stomach

**ragamuffins** i.e. his ragged company of soldiers

peppered shot and killed; this would enable Falstaff to pocket his soldiers' pay

141 **town's end** outskirts of the town where beggars congregate

144 **vaunting** bragging, vainglorious

148 **Turk Gregory** Pope Gregory VII or XIII; both had violent reputations

**Turk** violent barbarian

149 **paid** repaid, settled with (i.e. killed



sure i.e. dead, but the prince shifts the sense to “out of danger”



155 **hot** Falstaff claims it has recently been fired frequently

sack destroy *out* i.e. from Falstaff's holster

157 **pierce** pronounced “perse”—the word puns on “Percy”

158 so so be it/thus—presumably miming his action

159 **carbonado** dish of scored, grilled meat

**grinning honour** i.e. the sort of honor Blunt has earned, whose expression is now fixed as death stiffens his facial muscles



160 so all well and good

161 **unlooked for** without being sought, unexpectedly

an end death/of my speech

*Excursions* outbursts of fighting moving across the stage

5 **make up** advance, bring up your forces

6 **retirement** retreat, insufficiently aggressive strategy

[amaze](#) alarm, bewilder

13 **stained** bloodstained (may play on sense of “dishonored”)



15 **breathe** rest, pause

21 point i.e. of his sword

22 **lustier maintenance** more vigorous bearing

23 **ungrown** immature; historically, John was thirteen at the time of the battle



25 **Hydra's heads** in Greek mythology, the Hydra was a monster that grew two heads for every one that was cut off

27 **colours** i.e. the king's

28 counterfeit'st impersonates



30 shadows reflections/those in disguise, actors

31 **very** real, true





37 **mine** my victim, conquest



41 are...arms lend strength to my arms

43 **pay** settle the debt/kill



*flieth* runs away





49 **mak'st...life** have some care for my life

52 **hearkened** waited eagerly for, sought

54 **insulting** threatening, harmful/boastful, contemptuous

58 **Make up to** move your forces forward





**sphere** orbit; stars and planets were thought to be contained within crystalline spheres



71 **name in arms** military reputation

73 **budding...crest** literally, chivalric favors decorating his helmet; figuratively, his glorious reputation



76 said done

*killeth* i.e. fatally wounds

79 brittle fragile



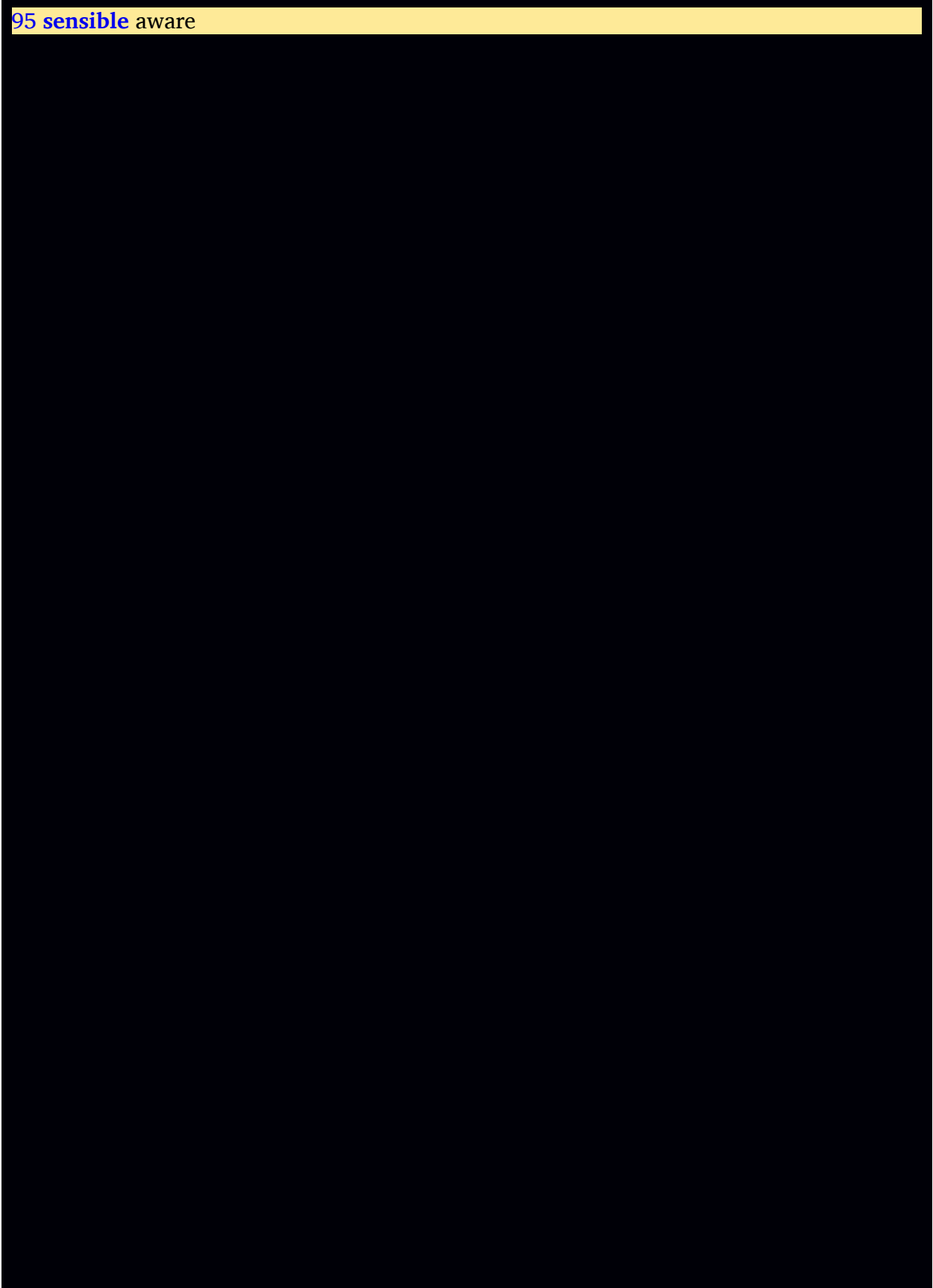
80 titles claims to honor

84 **prophecy** conventional belief held that the dying were able to foretell the future



91 **too...bound** insufficient to contain it

94 **stout** strong, valiant



96 **show of zeal** expression of feeling

97 favours chivalric tokens worn on his helmet



101 **ignominy** shame

106 **heavy...thee** miss you greatly (**heavy** plays on the sense of “weighty, fat”)

109 **dearer** more noble/more valuable

110 Embowelled disemboweled (in preparation for embalming)

111 **in blood** in his own blood (plays on hunting term; a **deer** that was **in blood** was vigorous and full of life)

113 powder embalm/preserve in salt (like venison)

114 **termagant** savage, violent

scot and lot in full



120 **discretion** good judgment

121 **gunpowder** i.e. fiery, explosive

125 **confutes** refutes, contradicts

128 **fleshed** initiated into fighting (plays on sense “sexually initiated”; from the practice of feeding hunting dogs raw meat to excite them)

129 **maiden** virgin, previously unused

sword with phallic connotations



138 **double man** ghost/two men (referring to the fact he carries Hotspur on his back)





146 at an instant simultaneously

147 **Shrewsbury clock** perhaps referring to an actual clock (e.g. the church clock), or a metaphorical phrase

149 take't...death swear as though I were about to die and my soul depended upon it



155 do thee grace bring you honor



happiest most favorable



*retreat* specific trumpet call signaling retreat

157 the...ours we have won

158 **highest** highest vantage point

161 do...less become a powerful nobleman/I'll slim down

162 **purge** repent, purify myself/take laxatives or emetics to cause weight loss

leave give up

1 rebuke punishment

2 **Ill-spirited** wicked, evil-hearted



**grace** goodwill, forgiveness

4 turn...contrary report the opposite

10 **true intelligence** honest information

11 **safety** concern for personal safety



16 field battlefield

20 Upon...fear running away in fear

29 to his pleasure to do as he pleases





35 **bend you** direct your course

dearest utmost

36 **prelate** ecclesiastical dignitary (i.e. the Archbishop of York, Richard **Scroop**)



# HENRY IV PART I

---

THE RSC SHAKESPEARE

MODERN



LIBRARY

**William Shakespeare**

Edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen

Introduction by Jonathan Bate